

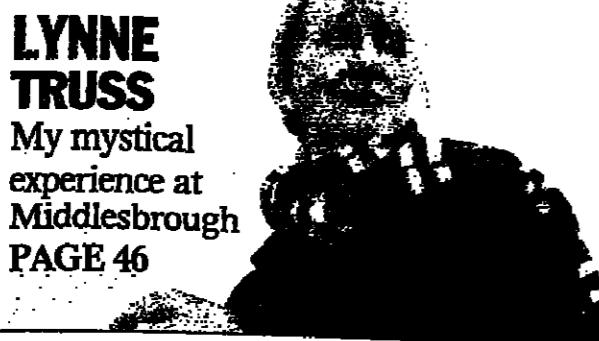
THE TIMES

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FRIDAY MARCH 7 1997

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Watchdog carpeted on private plans

City ordered to pay up on pensions

By ROBERT MILLER AND PHILIP WEBSTER

THE City's most senior watchdog has been carpeted over "foot-dragging" in the £4-billion personal pensions mis-selling scandal, and been told by a Treasury minister to make rapid and decisive progress towards compensating the victims.

At least 600,000 people are still awaiting compensation, years after being wrongly advised to exchange generous occupational pension schemes for expensive personal plans.

Failure to deal with the problem could jeopardise attempts to privatise the state pension scheme, since public confidence in insurance and pensions companies is unlikely to be restored until all the victims are identified and paid.

And as the Government was announcing its Basic Pensions Plus proposals on Wednesday, Angela Knight summoned Sir Andrew Large, head of the Securities and Investments Board, to the Treasury to demand action.

Sir Andrew was given three weeks to "complete a specific round of discussions with the firms with most to do". Mrs Knight said last night: "I am looking for rapid and decisive results from the pensions industry. Targets will be set to ensure that people are put right. Sir Andrew has already said that there can be no more foot-dragging. He demands huge progress in 1997. I will settle for nothing less."

Sir Andrew, who is due to stand down from his £30,000-a-year post in May, is understood to have felt that criticism levelled at his organi-

Labour at 54%

Labour has moved to a 26-point lead over the Tories, according to a Gallup survey in today's *Daily Telegraph*. The poll suggests that Labour has gained five points over the past month with the Tories slipping by six points.

Labour is on 54 per cent, the Tories on 28 per cent and the Liberal Democrats on 12.5 per cent.

isation was unjustified. But he himself conceded in November that the initial compensation deadlines had been "missed by a mile". Of the 500,000 "most urgent" cases identified since the review began in 1994, only 25,000 have been completed and £50 million of redress offered.

Many are nurses, teachers, miners, firefighters and police officers who were advised to leave their occupational schemes and join personal plans with high set-up and administrative charges and uncertain final payouts. Some have resorted to the courts for redress, while the pension firms have been told that they face heavy fines or expulsion from the industry if the victims are not paid on time.

The Government's proposed reforms of the pension system are dependent on public trust in the private companies that would invest people's life savings and ministers are anxious that the problems that arose from the personal pensions revolution

of the 1980s should be resolved.

Labour raised the question of trust in its response to Peter Lilley's announcement on Wednesday, and today Tony Blair again addresses the regulatory problems of private provision although, writing in *The Times*, he adds: "I do not believe that the mis-selling and high costs that so many have suffered in the past are or were inevitable. They came about because the Government got its partnership with the private sector wrong."

In his article, Mr Blair rejects the central features of the proposed reforms and promises to keep both the old-age pension and the state earnings-related pension scheme for those who want it. Serps, he writes, is the "benchmark against which individuals can judge whether personal provision is best for them".

He does, however, describe the Government's plans as "bold" and as opening up the way to sensible debate. "There is an ageing population and unless we plan for that challenge, it could create a serious crisis both for tomorrow's elderly and their children and grandchildren."

Mr Blair's article will be seen as an attempt to counter criticisms yesterday that Labour spokesmen had given a purely knee-jerk reaction in dismissing Mr Lilley's proposals. Conservatives have been delighted by the "negative" response.

Tony Blair, page 18



Douglas Hogg leaves Downing Street yesterday after attending a Cabinet meeting

Hogg denies meat hygiene report was suppressed

By POLLY NEWTON AND MICHAEL HORNSBY

DOUGLAS HOGG moved yesterday to discredit an unpublished and damning report on the British meat industry by suggesting that five of its six contributors were unhappy with the way it was written by its editor.

The report, produced in December 1995, described routine unhygienic practices in abattoirs and gave a warning that *E. coli* — the bacterium that recently killed 20 people in Scotland — was being brought into slaughterhouses via contaminated hides.

According to its editor, Bill Swann — a former Official Veterinary Surgeon — it was suppressed because it would have caused too much damage to a meat industry already hit hard by the BSE crisis.

In a Commons statement prompted by the leak of the report, Mr Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, said it was "a working document" that had not been shown to ministers. He said Mr Swann had been asked to compile the report based on the findings of Hygiene Advice Teams that visited 450 abattoirs in England, Wales and Scotland. Inspections were carried out at the request of the Meat Hygiene Service, an agency of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Yesterday, the ministry insisted that all the report's recommendations were being implemented, and said a 27-page document, which it released, had been made available in August to farmers and meat industry representatives.

Mr Hogg said: "Mr Swann's first draft was regarded as rather unsatisfactory, and not fully reflecting the views of others who had taken part in the review. Mr Swann was asked to recast his contribution, but was not willing to do so."

Mr Hogg denied that the report had been suppressed. He said a revised version had been circulated within the industry. He told MPs that the review of abattoirs that led to the report was referred to in the Meat Hygiene Service's annual report, published last summer. Any MP who was interested could have requested a copy of the Hygiene Advice Team's revised report, which did not contain a specific warning about *E. coli*.

Mr Swann, a member of the Hygiene Advice Team as well as the report editor, said: "I totally refute the statement made by Mr Hogg that the other members of the editorial group did not agree the draft of this report."

He referred to the document the ministry produced yesterday, saying it appeared to "bear little resemblance" to the draft of more than 50 pages with 81 recommendations which he had last seen in December 1995.

At a ministry press conference

Continued on page 2, col 5

Leading article, page 21



Gunman takes £700,000 Picasso

By JOANNA BALE

A PAINTING by Picasso worth £700,000 was stolen from a London art gallery yesterday by a man armed with a sawn-off shotgun. He escaped in a taxi.

The oil painting, *Tête de Femme*, was a 1939 portrait of Picasso's mistress, Dora Maar, and was for sale at the Lefevre Gallery in the West End. Its insurers have offered a reward of up to £50,000 for information leading to its return.

The robber walked through an open door into the gallery just after 11 am with a bag containing the shotgun and asked an assistant how much the painting was worth. He told her that he had a shotgun and asked her to take it off the wall. When she refused, he grabbed it and ran outside to a taxi which he had paid to wait.

The driver was ordered at gunpoint to take him to Wimbledon, southwest London.

Jacqui Cartwright, the gallery assistant, said: "He came straight to my desk asking only for that one picture. He looked like an art student with long hair in a ponytail. He asked the price of the painting and I answered him."

"Then he told me he had a shotgun and he wanted the picture. I said 'I beg your pardon'. He said 'Get it off the wall for me.' and I said I return.

The robber walked through an open door into the gallery just after 11 am with a bag containing the shotgun and asked an assistant how much the painting was worth. He told her that he had a shotgun and asked her to take it off the wall. When she refused, he grabbed it and ran outside to a taxi which he had paid to wait.

The driver was ordered at gunpoint to take him to Wimbledon, southwest London.



Human clones 'in two years'

Human clones could be created in less than two years, Ian Wilmut, the scientist who created Dolly, the cloned sheep, told a committee of MPs.

Mr Dalrymple of Tyler Fine Art Loss Adjusters, representing the underwriters Hiscox syndicates at Lloyd's and Nordstern Art Insurance, said: "The painting will never find a buyer at a serious price. Eventually it will be tempted by the £50,000 reward.

Speaking outside the gallery, Detective Inspector Bob Dardis said that Interpol had been alerted. Officers were examining the security camera footage.

The man was described as being in his early 30s, 5 ft 10 in, of slim build, with brown, shoulder-length hair in a ponytail. He was wearing brown, tinted glasses and a camouflage jacket, and had a London accent.

Train derailed

Three people were slightly injured when a passenger train was derailed just outside Newton Abbot station in Devon. Eight carriages of the 1535 Great Western service from Paddington to Penzance came off the track.

Speaking outside the gallery, Detective Inspector Bob Dardis said that Interpol had been alerted. Officers were examining the security camera footage.

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Jagan dies

Cheddi Jagan, President of Guyana, died of heart problems in hospital in Washington at 78. A Communist, in 1992 he won the country's first democratic elections in 28 years. Pages 16, 23

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His lordship has a day dispensing common justice

By FRANCES GIBB
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A BURGLAR found himself before the most senior judge in the land yesterday when he appeared at Liverpool Crown Court to be sentenced for his repeated break-ins.

Instead of the usual circuit judge, Paul Eaton was brought before Lord Bingham, the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales. If the accused had heard that the senior judiciary were soft on crime, he was in for a shock.

Eaton, 37, of Edge Hill, who pleaded guilty to three burglaries and an attempted burglary last year while on bail, had been told by his lawyers to expect three to four years. Lord Bingham sent him down for six. "The time has come when the public deserve a respite from your continuing offences," Eaton was told. His lawyers are considering an appeal.

Lord Bingham's day at the cradle of the criminal courts continued with fining a seasoned shoplifter in his 60s, who stole a jar of coffee £100. A spokesman for Lord Bingham said the Lord Chief Justice was keen to see how the courts operated on the ground at the sharp end of things, and

he thought the best way to do that was to sit there himself. Today in Liverpool, Lord Bingham will constitute a rare sitting of the Court of Appeal's criminal division outside London — the first time for nearly 20 years.

If successful, the move could lead to regular regional sittings of the Court, with big savings in time and costs for all those who now have to travel to London. Lord Bingham said: "My own preference is for as much work being done in regional centres as possible."

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Bluster-bomb stuns beastly foe — for now

MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

IT'S not that Labour's arguments are stronger than the Tories'. It is more that creeping feeling that nothing is to any avail. Over tea after PM's Questions yesterday I discussed with a former sketchwriter, Andrew Rawnsley, his reverie in which Mr Major is playing a children's computer game. An army of grotesque cyber-beasties is advancing towards the Tory player, munching their way through walls, parachuting from the air and hang-gliding from cliffs.

For the Major player there are means of counter-attack — exploding tax-bombs, whammies, double-whammies and killer-rebutals — but these are limited supply. Time, too, is running out. And still the Blairite cyber-beasties advance. *Munch-munch-munch*.

On the beasts' onslaught went into overdrive at PM's Questions yesterday afternoon. The cyber-assailants ambushed John Major over *E.coli* and a review of hygiene in slaughterhouses. Beastie Leader, Tony Blair, let fly a string of missiles concerning documents, civil servants and recommendations. Whether there was anything in these missiles was unclear, but Mr Blair munched his way forward with such confidence that the effect was to beauteur the Prime Minister.

John Major appears to have become a Buddhist. In recent days he has faced attack with a Zen-like detachment, reciting his responses in a kind of trance, relaxed as you please. It would not have been out of place if someone were to have lit a joss-stick, or tinkled a little bell, in the breaks during his increasingly prolix replies. By the end of PM's Questions, Ma-

jor's nerve remained steady, but the cyber-beasties and their Leader were swarming closer.

Next on our screen came a new game: *Hunt the Hogg*.

In this game the beasties try to torment and ridicule a Tory dwarf-warrior. Yesterday's game involved the Hogg trying to climb out of a hole dug for him by Meat Hygiene Service cyber-slaves, while everyone else tries to push him back. He held his own.

Munch-munch-munch. On the beasties marched. And then — a shock. An unexpected reverse for the besieging army! The Tories fielded their reserve cyber-weapons: the Heseltine blaster-bomb. A debate on public expenditure was opened by the Deputy Prime Minister.

Seldom in recent months has this weapon been deployed to such good effect. In a series of small explosions and an impressive fireworks display, the beasties were subjected to a wilier assault. In one dramatic engagement the Heseltine took out the cyber-invaders' deputy-super-monster, John Prescott, with a salvo of killer-quotes from the monster's recent excursion to the Wirral. The monster's eyes rolled. He was temporarily disabled.

It was a sweet moment for the Heseltine blaster-bomb. Blue eyes blazing and man (slightly thinning) swept back, the blond bombshell gripped the dispatch box and chucked as Labour's deputy-super-monster reeled. But behind the triumph, I could see fear in the Heseltine's eyes. Any day now, as, revelling in his old skills, he hits the controls, a message will flash on to the screen: "Game Over".

He fumbles for loose change for yet another game — one last game, please God. But his pockets are empty. *Munch-munch-munch*... on they come.

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Setting the agenda

All this week Westminster has been convulsed by the McAlpine memoirs in *The Times*, the paper that sets the political agenda.

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Steps to improve meat hygiene 'inadequate'

Children sue ministers over E coli

BY POLLY NEWTON, POLITICAL REPORTER

SEVEN children who were struck down by *E. coli* infection last year have been granted legal aid to sue the Government for failing to minimise public risk from the bacteria.

Their lawyers argue that ministers at the Department of Health and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food must have known of the increasing threat posed by *E. coli* but did not take adequate steps to improve meat hygiene or food labelling.

Between 10 and 15 more cases are being submitted to the Legal Aid Board for consideration over the next week by the solicitors acting for the group, Howe and Co, of London. Lucy Kennedy, of Howe, said yesterday that they would be seeking £10,000 for the pain and suffering caused to the children, with the possibility of a further claim in the future for any child who fell ill again as a result of being infected with *E. coli*.

The bacteria can cause long-term damage to the kidneys, and Ms Kennedy said a kidney transplant for any of the children would prompt a claim for between £80,000 and £100,000. "These children will not be able to get medical insurance now. These parents are being told there is a good

chance their child will require aggressive medical treatment, or they might need to have private medical care overseas, and they cannot get insurance."

"They are absolutely frantic about it. They cannot do anything to protect themselves."

Among the children who have been granted legal aid to sue are Katie Thomas, 7, and her sister Rachel, 4, who became seriously ill after being infected with *E. coli* last September. Rachel spent nearly two weeks in Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool, where she was on a kidney dialysis machine and underwent two blood transfusions. Katie spent ten days in the hospital.

Their parents, Gary Thomas, 43, a Customs and Excise officer, and his wife, Chris, believe Katie contracted the infection from a McDonald's hamburger and then passed it on to Rachel. One of the other cases granted legal aid, involving a girl from Newcastle upon Tyne, is also alleged to stem from a McDonald's burger. McDonald's will be named in the action.

The other legal aid cases involve two children from each of two families who held barbecues in the Stoke-on-Trent area last summer.



Katie Thomas, top, and her sister Rachel, who became seriously ill after being infected last year

Meat report

Continued from page 1

ence yesterday. Peter Soul, head of operations at the Meat Hygiene Service and a member of the report's editorial board, backed Mr Hogg, saying board members felt Mr Swann's draft "did not present a balanced view".

Two other team members last night refused to say whether they backed Mr Swann, and two others were unavailable.

John Major was drawn into the row at Prime Minister's question time when Tony Blair asked: "Why was this report not published on March 31, 1996, as Mr Swann was told that it would be, and why did ministers not see this report and act upon it?"

Mr Blair will today make a manifesto pledge to create an independent Food Standards Agency to protect consumers.

Council leaders quit over expenses claims

The two leading members of Labour-controlled Doncaster council resigned yesterday after the district auditor reported that members had wrongly claimed expenses for foreign trips and entertaining. Peter Walsh, leader for three years and a councillor for 15, said he stepped down because "speculation and conjecture following the publication of the report has caused distress both to me and my family". Ray Stockill, his deputy for the past two years and a councillor since 1980, said his close association with the leader made him feel he should also stand down.

New trial for footballers

Three football stars voiced their disappointment yesterday after being told by the Crown Prosecution Service that they face a new trial on match-fixing charges after a jury at Winchester Crown Court failed to reach a verdict. No date has been fixed for the retrial of Bruce Grobbelaar, Hans Segers and John Fashanu as well as Heng Suan Lim, a Malaysian businessman.

Council workers on strike

Twenty thousand council workers staged a one-day strike yesterday as Scottish councils met to fix budgets for next year. Average tax increases of 13 per cent were expected across the country's 32 councils. The stoppage by members of the Unison union, which claims that 10,000 jobs are at risk, affected Edinburgh, Glasgow and Midlothian.

Sex and drugs teacher jailed

A teacher who supplied drugs to three schoolgirls of 15 and had sex with two of them was jailed for two years yesterday. Stephen Carberry, 38, befriended the girls on a school trip to Holland. He appeared at Kirkcudbright Sheriff Court after having admitted charges of supplying cannabis resin and of having unlawful sex with two of the girls.

Mod 'needs new big planes'

The Ministry of Defence is too dependent on chartering ageing Russian and Ukrainian transport planes for ferrying British troops and equipment to emergency military operations, the Commons Defence Committee said yesterday. The committee urged the Government to rejoin Europe's Future Large Aircraft programme.

Dog handler wins race case

The first black dog handler in the Prison Service has been awarded £19,500 for racial discrimination over his treatment at Wormwood Scrubs prison. After a ten-day hearing a north London industrial tribunal ruled that Philip Ballantyne had been unjustifiably disciplined and taken off the dog section for a year.

Row over 'sectarian' minister

The political future of Baroness Denton, the Employment Equality Minister in Northern Ireland, was in doubt last night after revelations that she tolerated sectarianism within her department. She organised the transfer of a Catholic secretary, the victim of harassment by a more senior Protestant, contrary to law in the Province.

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Many white goods have not made light work for women

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

FAR from liberating women, labour-saving devices have left them spending just as many hours in the kitchen as their mothers or grandmothers did.

When the automatic washing machine, the dishwasher and the microwave oven arrived in the 1960s, 70s and 80s, many believed that women were on the verge of a domestic revolution, Catherine Cronin, a university researcher, said. "But despite this great boom in domestic technology, the hours that women spend on domestic work haven't changed appreciably," she says. "The kitchen is on the go all day: it's constant, repetitive work."

Ms Cronin will tell the Edinburgh Science Festival later this month in a talk entitled "So who's doing the washing up now?" that not only have "white goods" not reduced women's working hours, but they have also given men a new excuse for shirking their share of the chores.

She says that as more and more women took on full-time jobs, reticent men had begun to take a small share of household responsibilities. The most common chore was washing the dishes. But now men know their home has a dishwasher they are likely to presume their help isn't needed and simply leave the dirty dishes lying on the table.

Ms Cronin, 27, who has a degree in mechanical engineering and an

MA in women's studies, does research at Stirling and Heriot-Watt universities, and lectures Open University students. She says that changing standards in society have added to women's work.

"In days gone by clothes were only washed and kitchen work-surfaces scrubbed when they looked physically dirty. But today when we have washing machines that feature pre-washes and programmes for conditioning clothes and adding sweet-smelling powders we feel under pressure to wash our clothes every time we wear them."

Men are as bad, if not worse than women, for demanding that their clothes look crisp and fresh, so they throw everything into the laundry basket which their partner then

normally washes, irons, then puts away. Microwaves, too, are a problem even though they were designed to save time, because now most men see them as taking all the work out of cooking, and so sit back while their wife heats up a meal that may still have taken a long time to prepare.

Designers of machines — who are overwhelmingly men — bear some of the responsibility, she says. They tend to go on adding features to machines rather than designing them to make the work easier. "We need more female designers, or more male designers who do some of the work in the house themselves, and understand it," Ms Cronin said.

"Domestic appliances have taken the labour out of many household tasks but they have not reduced the

time women spend on them. They have also added to the divisions of what is classed as 'men's work' and what is 'women's work'."

"Where once men may have appreciated that scrubbing dishes in a basin was hard work and offered to help, they don't think about the amount of time it takes to clear the table and load the dishwasher; collect the dirty clothes and divide them into colours, whites, and woollens, hang the clothes up, iron them and so on."

"Domestic work may not be quite as rigorous thanks to the new appliances, but it is just as time-consuming because there is more of it to do, thanks to the new demand for higher standards of hygiene that the machines have brought."



Women today are just as likely to be stuck in the kitchen as were housewives back in the Sixties

'Fuddy duddy' Mothers' Union seeks new name

By EMMA WILKINS



THE Mothers' Union is considering changing its name after a survey of members described the organisation as "fuddy duddy", "holier than thou" and over concerned with "tea-making and trivia".

The union, a cornerstone of the Anglican Church since its foundation in 1876, has seen membership fall in Britain by 100,000 over the past ten years to just 140,000 members. The survey, carried out by NOP, found many members felt the organisation was "too cliquey" and "almost like a secret society". Special derision was reserved for the name "Mothers' Union", which members felt was inaccurate and anachronistic.

The harsh judgements, which were disclosed just days before Mothering Sunday, were presented to members in the union's magazine, *Home & Family*.

Margaret Duggan, the magazine's editor, writes in the spring edition: "The research painted a bleak picture of ageing membership, lack of dynamism, leadership, a resistance to change, loss of practical value and prestige and an organisation out of step with today's environment and the changing role of women."

Many members felt the age of members was no high. Mrs Duggan added: "The general image of the Mothers' Union is of an elderly organisation,

so cliquish as to be regarded almost as a secret society and of no relevance to younger women."

Lady Eames, worldwide president of the Mothers' Union, said the trustees were taking the findings of the survey "very seriously indeed". While acknowledging that the membership had declined in Britain, Lady Eames pointed out that overseas interest is strong, with 750,000 members worldwide.

There is enormous enthusiasm for the Mothers' Union in other parts of the world. What we are finding in the UK is reflected right across the board among all women's organisations. There are now so many things competing for women's time and interest and

commitment that I think they are being very selective about the organisations they are willing to join or be identified with.

Lady Eames said it was "very possible" the name "Mothers' Union" would be reconsidered. "The Mothers' Union is very proud of its past, but for the first time, the signs are there is a leaning towards a change of name," said Lady Eames, whose husband is the Archbishop of Armagh.

The Mothers' Union, which is one of the world's largest Christian organisations, has always regarded itself as a defender of the sanctity of marriage. Divorced women were not allowed to join the Mothers' Union until a change of rules in 1973.

In 1974 a new Royal Charter for the organisation was granted that allowed anyone baptised to be a member, including unmarried mothers and men. In 1993, the Mothers' Union opened a branch in Holloway Prison. Nine women prisoners with babies promised to uphold the organisation's aims, including a commitment to bringing up children in the life of the Church.

There are 5,558 Mothers' Union branches in Anglican parishes in Britain and the organisation works in 150 Anglican dioceses in other countries. At midday each day members are expected to join together in prayer.



Toni Bradley describes the compliments she received on her first day back

Gabrielle called in murder trial



THE pop singer Gabrielle yesterday told a court that her former lover — who is accused of murdering his stepfather — was a kind and considerate person. Gabrielle, real name Louise Bobb, was giving evidence for the prosecution on the third day of the trial at Nottingham Crown Court.

The prosecution allege her former boyfriend Anthony Antoniou, and another man, Timothy Redhead, killed Walter McCarthy, 59, and dumped his headless body at a beauty spot off the A57 in the Peak District. The head was discovered in woodland in Bedfordshire.

Gabrielle, who has a son by Mr Antoniou, arrived at court by taxi and smiled briefly at the child's father as she took the stand. She told the court that he was not an aggressive person and had treated her well. She said her relationship with Mr Antoniou had begun

Gabrielle said that her former lover was kind

on a business footing but they had later become lovers. "He was a kind and considerate man who would spoil me rotten," she said.

Mr Antoniou, a Greek Cypriot, began seeing Gabrielle in

1992, the court has been told. It is alleged that, after the killing, he turned up at her flat in Lewisham, south London, "out of the blue". While staying there, he is said to have set fire to his Nissan turbo car, which was allegedly used in the murder.

The prosecution has claimed that Mr McCarthy, who married Antoniou's mother Aphrodite in 1979, was probably attacked from behind as he sat in the front seat of the car.

Mr Antoniou has told police that Mr McCarthy boasted of being unfaithful to his stepson's mother, and said that he had abused children.

The jury of five women and seven men listened for almost an hour as Dr Clive Bouch, a Home Office pathologist, listed almost 60 injuries to the body — including 52 stab wounds. He said several of these had cut through bone

and major internal organs, and one had virtually severed a hand. The beheading was the result of several blows from a weapon. Under cross examination from James Hunt, QC, defending Mr Antoniou, Dr Bouch said the decapitation had probably occurred after death, or "during the process of dying".

Gabrielle said that, although Mr Antoniou had attended the birth of their son in April 1995, their relationship had then ended.

She said she was aware that on Mr McCarthy had been found dead eight months later on December 23, and she had seen a picture of Mr Antoniou, whom she had last seen at the birth, on the television news.

Mr Antoniou, 30, from Parsons Cross, Sheffield, and Mr Redhead, 29, from Woodhouse, Sheffield, deny murder. The trial continues today.

Hats off to jobless secretary who was inspired by Thatcher

By PAUL WILKINSON

AN UNEMPLOYED secretary who took Margaret Thatcher's advice and set up her own business has won her fight against officials who tried to close her down.

In 1986, June Jordison used her £1,000 savings and secured £40 a week from the Government's Enterprise Allowance Scheme to set up a hat hire service from her home in Darlington, Co Durham. The business blossomed, until a complaint from a neighbour to the town's planning department.

Darlington council ordered Mrs Jordison, 62, to apply for retrospective planning permission and then turned down her application in spite of a 200-signature petition from other neighbours and custom-

ers. The planners followed up with an order to cease trading.

Yesterday she learnt that her appeal, which she conducted herself before a Department of Environment Inspector, had been successful.

"I am absolutely delighted, not just for me but for all the wonderful customers who wrote in supporting me. Justice has prevailed," she said.

"I want to carry on the business until I am 65 and my pension and life policies come into force, and I will retire to the seaside. If I had been forced to stop now I would be unemployed again and it would ruin all my retirement plans."

"The business does not earn a great deal. It keeps me ticking over but I couldn't afford to open up a shop. I thought I had done everything

by the book when setting up. This all started because of a single complaint that visitors caused traffic problems, but that just isn't the case. There is only one visitor at a time, as everyone is given a one-hour appointment."

Mrs Jordison, a divorcee, was made redundant in 1986.

"I got the idea of a hat business after hiring one for my daughter's wedding. It was a time when Margaret Thatcher was encouraging people to set up, so when I visited the job centre I applied to join the Enterprise Allowance Scheme," she said.

Clients can choose from 500 hats bought from some of London's leading milliners. She makes her own trimmings, so one hat can suit several outfits. Once they have passed their best they go to Oxfam.

"He realises he could be incriminating himself by giving this evidence, and may be liable to prosecution, but he is willing to accept the consequences in order to give all the facts to the court."

"Mr Jones says that if he is successful with this case he will go to the benefits office and repay all the money which is owed to them as a result of the fiddle. If he loses he will not be able to repay the money and could face prosecution. But it is a risk he is willing to take."

Miss Lee and their two children, aged 6 and 2, have moved into a £300,000 clifftop home overlooking Langland Bay with a Jacuzzi, sauna and swimming pool. The case continues

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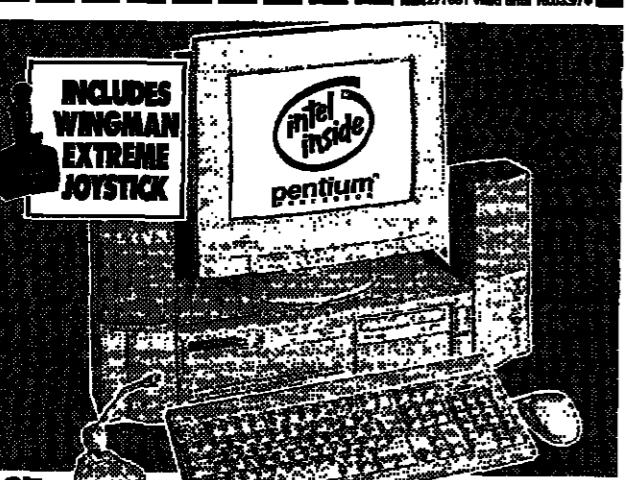
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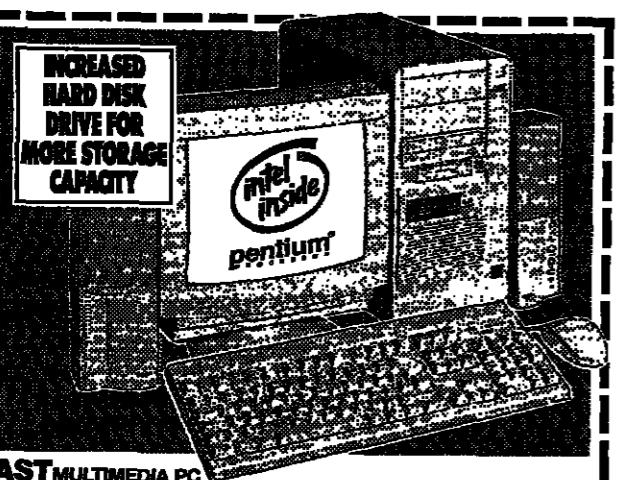
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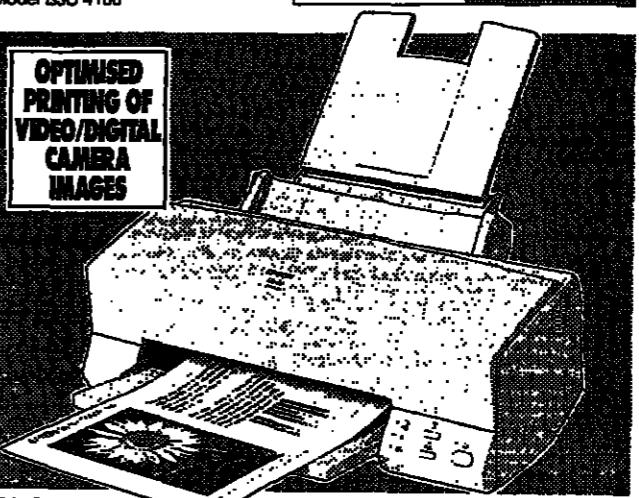


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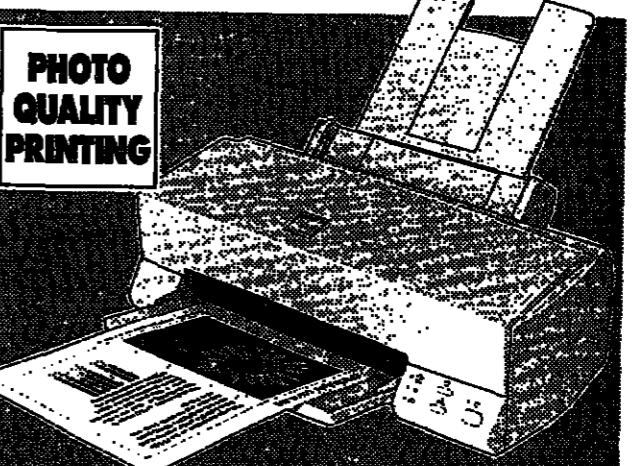
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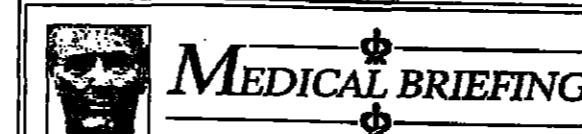
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When shedding 4½ stone requires nerves of Steel



Lady Steel and Sir David in her days at 15 stone



Dr Thomas Stuttaford

THE shedding of 4½ stone in nine months by a 15-stone Lady Steel rivals the dramatic weight loss achieved by her husband's political opponent, Lord Lawson of Blaby, when he was on a diet. When he shrunk to a shadow of his former self, those who did not suspect he had some terrible wasting disease wondered about the lifestyle that frequently leads to obesity in politicians.

Politicians' lives, if they are to keep in contact with opinion formers, tend to revolve around eating and drinking. It requires great strength of will for even the most humble backbencher to reject all that is offered, and the temptations must be much greater for a former Chancellor such as Lord Lawson.

Even being careful, drinking at formal lunches and dinners would represent a weekly alcohol intake of 70 units, which the most liberal doctor would consider too much. The calorie intake from this drinking, as well as from the rich food served, would be enough to keep a miner working at the pit face.

It is not often realised that politicians' wives, as well as the MPs tucked away in Westminster, are faced with

their own temptations to eat too much. Clinical obesity is every bit as dangerous to middle-aged women as it is to men, as they are no less liable to develop cardio-vascular disease once the menopause is over, and to suffer diabetes. They are also more in danger from osteoarthritis of the knees and hips.

The temptation for the wife who finds herself abandoned in the constituency is not the result of being served slap-up meals at L'Escargot or the Savoy; instead it centres on the larder in her own kitchen. After Sir David Steel had left his Scottish constituency on a Monday, Judy Steel spent her time restoring the family house, Alkwood Tower, in Scotland. But an interest in bricks and mortar would not have compensated for the loss of her partner's company at weekday meal times. In the lonely weeks which Lady

Steel must have endured while her husband was in London, the pleasures of comfort eating must have proved every bit as beguiling as the entreaties of a Savoy waiter.

Losing 4½ stone has revolutionised Lady Steel's appearance, and she is reported as saying that it has given her an entirely new image of herself. She has revitalised her self-confidence, is no longer self-conscious in company, and when by herself in the fitting room of a boutique, can look in the mirror with pleasure. She was given a target of 10½ stone when she started attending Scottish Slimmers, which she never thought she would achieve. But nine months following a pre-planned programme and suggested dieting recipes saw the pounds fall away.

Lady Steel's diet would

delight the Health Education Council, for she has not lost weight so quickly that she has endangered her health. The diet has resulted in a weight loss of around half a stone a month, about 2lb a week, which is the approved medical rate. Weight loss for those who have the strength and will to continue with this regime, results in a reduction in their obesity which is likely to be maintained, so that the patient has the great satisfaction of knowing that once the diet is over they are less likely to put on the pounds again.

Very low-calorie diets – around 800 calories a day – have come in for criticism, but although Lady Steel, 56, did not adopt one, they can have a place in the battle against obesity. Any low-calorie diet must always be designed so that it contains enough protein to protect the essential organs, including the kidney and heart, from damage which might occur from excessive protein loss, and they must include a full complement of vitamins and trace elements. Ideally however, the seriously overweight should all follow Lady Steel's example and stick to a standard, well-balanced diet, but eat – and drink – less.



Revitalised, and 4½ stone lighter, after 9 months

Clones of humans 'possible in two years'

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR,
AND TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

HUMAN clones could be created in less than two years, the scientist who created Dolly, the cloned sheep, said yesterday – although he added that such work should be banned.

Ian Wilmut, of the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, told MPs that he believed the technique could be applied to human beings, if researchers were determined. Appearing before the Science and Technology Select Committee, Dr Wilmut was asked how easy it would be to clone a person.

"I've hesitated to make predictions, but I'm sure if you really wanted to do it you could do it," he said. He told the MPs that his team had used more than a thousand unfertilised eggs to clone Dolly, and this was a measure of the difficulties to be faced in cloning a human being. "But if you were prepared to make that sort of effort, you would expect to make significant progress in one or two years."

He said that everyone at the institute and PPL Therapeutics, the company collaborating with the cloning research team, believed that such work involving human embryos would be offensive and should be prohibited.

Professor Graham Buffield, director of the institute, pointed out that in 15 years there had been no attempt to apply genetic modification to humans. But he could see "in extremis" circumstances where someone somewhere might attempt human cloning.

Dr Wilmut said the suggested applications for human cloning made no sense. "The idea that you can bring back a child, that you can bring back your father – it is simply nonsensical. You can make a genetically identical copy, but you can't get back the person you have lost." The scientists said that cloning work on farm animals would continue.

America's chief of medical

research yesterday opposed a proposed ban on human cloning in the United States. Dr Harold Varmus, director of the National Institutes for Health, said that while he found the idea of cloning experiments personally "offensive", society might find it morally defensible under certain conditions. If the technique were ever perfected for humans, he said, it could be employed in rare circumstances such as infertility in couples wishing to have genetically related offspring. In testimony before Congress, Dr Varmus said: "Maybe there are some situations in which we would find it ethical."

His comments came as House Republicans, defying President Clinton's earlier request to delay any action for 90 days, introduced two Bills to prohibit all human cloning. Mr Clinton this week implemented a temporary federal ban and urged the private sector to impose a voluntary moratorium on experiments while the National Bioethics Advisory Commission considered the issue.

After Dolly was cloned from cells removed from an adult ewe, researchers in Oregon announced that two rhesus monkeys had been cloned from embryo cells.

Vernon Ehlers, a Republican congressman for Michigan, said it was essential to introduce prohibitive legislation that would prevent public concern leading to a ban on all genetic research.

Dr Varmus, however, said that unless laws were very carefully drawn by Congress they could wreck valuable research that might save lives in the future and lead to greater food production on farms. The Senate is to debate the issue next week in hearings that will include testimony by Dr Wilmut.

Letters, page 21

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Grapefruit makes a great start to the day

Buyers offer sealed bids for scarce properties

Home sellers earn bonus from 'golden postcodes'

By KATHERINE BERGEN AND GLEN OWEN

ESTATE agents say "golden postcode" areas are emerging in Britain where the number of buyers far exceeds sellers and it is almost impossible to find a house. Some areas have an average of 11 buyers for every new home for sale, according to a survey by Black Horse Agencies.

Earlier this week a three-bedroom cottage in Eland Road, Battersea, south London, went on the market for £185,000 with Foxtons and in six hours 21 people had viewed it and four offers of the asking price were submitted. It sold the following day for more than £200,000 after sealed bids.

The fastest selling areas are Alton in Hampshire, Cambridge, Chelmsford in Essex, Southampton, Richmond in southwest London, Slough, Norwich, Derby, Guildford and Letchworth, Hertfordshire. The average number of viewers for each house from the time it is put on the market until it is sold ranges from three in Derby to nine in Slough and up to 14 in Richmond.

Traditionally expensive areas of London are experiencing the boom, according to Louise Hewlett of Aylesford. Houses in Chelsea that would have taken months to sell two years ago can now be sold instantly. "We would give our



eye teeth to get an instruction on houses in Tregunter Road or The Boltons," she said. "In one recent case we offered someone £1 million over the market value of their family home and they still refused."

Once unfashionable areas are also becoming attractive. Richard Crosthwaite, a partner at Knight Frank, says money is rippling out from central London as far as Tooting to the south. "Houses with five or six bedrooms on the north side of Tooting Bec Common or off Trinity Road might have increased as much as £100,000 in the last year," he said.

Some price rises can be attributed to peculiar local factors. Hilary Wade at Winkworth's said that the "bonus culture" in the City had pushed up Islington prices. "Islington is an historically undervalued area, and the bankers are pouring money into it," she said.

"People from different coun-

tries seem to have their favourite areas. There is also a lot of Russian money pouring into Pimlico, mostly cash buyers," Ms Wade said.

Hong Kong buyers are coming to Winkworth's Islington office, keen to invest in British housing because of doubts over the Chinese takeover.

Property speculators are pushing up prices in Blackheath in south London, pitting their hopes on the millennium exhibition at nearby Greenwich and the Jubilee Line extension. Money is also coming from the number of businesses relocating to Canary Wharf. Ms Wade said: "Many of the big banks are moving out to the wharf. Citibank being just the latest. That is having a huge effect on Blackheath, which can be reached quickly by car from there."

Colin Fitzgerald from Hamptons said that properties in Alton, Hampshire, were a significant presence in London. Philip Green at Goldschmidt and Howland, said that the effect of newly-acquired Russian money was being felt in many areas. "Russian cash buyers can afford multimillion pound properties in Bishops Avenue, a favourite of the Sultan of Brunei. There these enormous houses with high walls, sweeping drives and servants go to them for up to £25 million. No one else gets a look in," he said.

Richard Smith of Savills says anything within a mile of the station in Sevenoaks, Kent, is in huge demand, especially with private roads and priced over £400,000. Good local schools are also a big draw. "Modern and older properties alike which meet these criteria sell virtually overnight," he said.



Eland Road in Battersea, designated a "golden postcode" by estate agents; a house advertised at £185,000 recently sold for more than £200,000 amid furious competition

Au pair's lawyers condemn police

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

LAWYERS representing Louise Woodward, the British au pair charged with the first degree murder of a nine-month-old baby in America, complained that she was not being treated fairly by the Massachusetts judiciary. The police were "squeezing" evidence, they said.

Miss Woodward's counsel said that the local police started with the assumption that the 19-year-old killed Matthew Eappen, the little boy she was looking after. Officers "worked backwards from that hypothesis, attempting to squeeze the investigative results into a pre-conceived pattern supporting their initial conclusion," according to the Boston law firm of Silvergate and Good, which recently took over Miss Woodward's case.

Miss Woodward has admitted shaking Matthew Eappen before he died, out of frustration at his incessant crying, but denies any intent to kill. Prosecutors believe they can show a pattern of abuse.

Matthew Eappen's mother, Deborah, criticised local and national media who have called for Miss Woodward to be granted bail, claiming she represented "a very high flight risk".



The tramp spurns job that lady won for him

BY ADRIAN LEE

SHE was a wealthy aristocrat, he was down on his luck, begging in the street. Huddled against the cold with only his alsatian dog for company, the plight of Oliver Lomasney touched Sara Apsley.

Not content with handing him £1 on the streets of Cirencester and buying him food, Lady Apsley helped him to land a labouring job. But yesterday, the tale of the Lady and the Tramp had an unhappy ending. The 25-year-old walked out of his job after less than three weeks.

Mike Suggs, site manager on the Cirencester bypass for Road Management Services, who agreed to employ Mr Lomasney, said: "He just didn't turn up for work one day. I'm afraid there are a lot more deserving lads round who have had a far harder background than him."

Lady Apsley, 31, of Cirencester Park, refused to be downcast. "I gather he has found a happier path. He has met up with his former girlfriend and they have got re-engaged. For reasons of his own he has decided the life and job here were not for him." Friends who were involved in protests against the bypass had also put him under pressure, she said.

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN

THE outspoken newspaper columnist and television presenter Richard Littlejohn is to take over from Danny Baker, who was sacked as host of Radio 5 Live's Saturday lunchtime football talkshow yesterday for making abusive remarks about a referee.

Baker is to join Talk Radio to present a Saturday afternoon football show. The two men will not compete head on, however. Baker's show will go out between 5.30pm and 7.30pm; Littlejohn's from noon to 1pm. Littlejohn said yesterday: "I want the programme to be controversial and the fans won't be getting an easy time from me."

Letters, page 21

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Troubled academics started fatal fire

TWO academics facing financial ruin died when they set fire to their rented home as bailiffs were on their way to evict them, an inquest was told yesterday. The couple locked themselves into their house and started six fires.

Dr Nigel Gauk-Roger and his wife, Dr Edwina Burness, both 46, owed thousands of pounds in rent arrears when they died last October. Just hours before their bodies were discovered in the burned-out bedroom of the farmhouse, in Six Mile Bottom, Cambridgeshire, Dr Gauk-Roger assured the property management company that he would comply with the eviction order. When the bailiffs arrived, the couple were locked inside their burning home.

The inquest at Histon, Cambridgeshire, heard that the couple owed £2,744 in arrears to the letting agents Camflats. Alan Bagott, of the company, told the hearing the couple had been given every opportunity to sort out the financial mess.

A post-mortem examination disclosed that the couple died of smoke inhalation and that Dr Burness, a part-time English lecturer at Anglia Polytechnic University, had terminal breast cancer.

Recording open verdicts on the couple, the Coroner, John Smith said: "It is quite clear that this was not a fire that was started by an electrical fault or discarded smoking materials. There is no doubt in my mind this was started deliberately."

Boil water
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Lantern paled

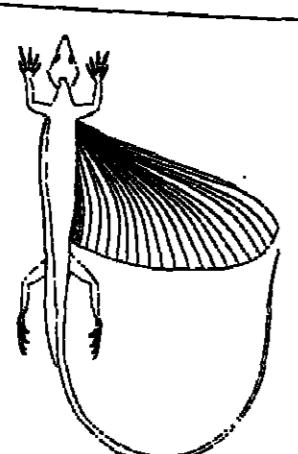
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An old reptile wins over new fans

By NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

THE OLDEST flying reptile spread its wings like a fan, gliding from tree to tree 100 million years before the first bird. Recently discovered fossils of the *Coelurosauravus jackeli* have shown that the foot-long creature had a gliding apparatus unlike that of any other animal.

The hollow bones that strengthened its wings formed in the skin and were not attached to any other part of the skeleton. It could not flap its wings, but used them to glide at up to 30mph.

A team from the State Museum of Natural History in Karlsruhe, Germany, and the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada, report in *Science* that new specimens collected by amateur fossil-hunters from the spoil tips of abandoned copper mines in the state of Hesse, central Germany, have at last clarified the anatomy of the reptile.

The first specimens were found in 1910 by a miner, who labelled it "flying reptile". He sold it to the palaeontologist Otto Jackel, who thought it so improbable that he concluded the wing ribs were the fin rays of a fish superimposed on the reptile, and removed them. But further specimens later proved the miner had been right.



Morley and eagle owl at London Zoo: seeking a raising of standards

By NICK NUTTALL, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

A NUMBER of zoos face closure under a Labour government, it was disclosed yesterday. Elliot Morley, the Opposition spokesman on animal welfare, said regulations would be introduced to drive up standards at zoos and wildlife parks.

The stricter controls have the backing of the Federation of Zoological Gardens of Great Britain and Ireland, whose members include London, Chester, Bristol and Edinburgh zoos. In addition, the import of some species, such as polar bears, which research indicates suffer psychologically in captivity, may be banned. "I do not think zoos will be keeping some species when the last ones in captivity die," Mr Morley said.

The Labour spokesman told a meeting at London Zoo that instead of being merely money-raising ventures, zoos of all sizes would have to meet modern standards on welfare, education, science and conservation. "Zoos were set up in Victorian times to exhibit animals as novelties where people came to stare. That was enough then but is no longer enough today."

Mr Morley said that some smaller zoos, together with

those at theme parks, had not made the transition from side show to the sophistication demanded by the public, which would also be required by Labour. A Labour government would set up a Captive Animal Welfare Council, mirroring the existing Farm Animal Welfare Council, which maintains standards in agriculture, to draft minimum standards and to enforce them, he said.

There would also be an independent assessment of the Zoo Licensing Act, which covers anyone wishing to show animals to the public. The Act mainly concerns health and safety issues, rather than the wider issues of welfare, research, education and conservation. "The Act is fairly limited," Mr Morley said. "It is also applied by local authorities with disparate standards. A zoo council, with a director-general, will lay down uniform standards nationally and each zoo will have a mission statement."

He conceded that some zoos with shoddy standards, insufficient vision, or funds to raise standards, would be under threat. "It is likely some will have to close." Mr Morley, a former council member of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, said a Labour government would consider setting up a closure fund for relocating animals at zoos that were closed.

He also pledged Labour support for an EU-led Zoo Directive, which is backed by the federation and by anti-zoo groups such as Born Free Foundation, co-founded by the actress Virginia McKenna. The directive would set minimum standards across the EU.

Mr Morley said he had visited, officially and incognito, a dozen zoos in Britain before formulating Labour's strategy and had been both gratified and appalled by the varying standards he had seen. He contrasted the poorer establishments with a small zoo at Alfriston, East Sussex, called Drusillas. "It is a small zoo, with a small number of animals and not with a great deal of money. But it is doing great and very positive work with children."

Ms McKenna said: "We welcome the important steps



Children can see the meerkats at close quarters through a transparent dome in their enclosure at Drusillas, where they learn through play

proposed by the Labour Party. I particularly applaud the independent assessment of the Zoo Licensing Act, the establishment of a Captive Animal Council, the commitment to a European Zoo Directive and the possible establishment of a guaranteed closure fund. I feel that zoo animals are starting to get the consideration they deserve."

A spokesman for the federation said it was less confident that Labour could secure Europe-wide laws on zoo standards. The plan, which could have led to shoddy zoos across Europe being closed, is expected to come before the European Commission in May. However, the proposals have been watered down into a recommendation, which would allow national governments to ignore them. Mr Morley said Labour would press for the recommendation to be upgraded to a directive during the British presidency of the EU in 1998.

Leading article, page 21

COLLECTIONS

THERE are around 300 zoos in Britain, ranging from the flagship establishment such as London to small collections of owls, birds of prey or even butterflies. Any collection of wild, as opposed to domestic animals, that is shown to the public for more than seven days a year is considered a zoo, as are aquaria such as sea life centres. Some 60 zoos are members of the Federation of Zoological Gardens of Great Britain and Ireland and abide by its guidelines. The federation was set up in 1966 by several zoological societies amid concern that the growing animal welfare movement might damage their future by securing unbalanced, anti-zoo legislation. It set standards of welfare and inspected members to ensure they were maintained.

It's cool to be a meerkat in Drusillas' model world

By NICK NUTTALL

DRUSILLAS zoo nestles in a fold of the South Downs near Alfriston, East Sussex, and is, according to Labour, a model for small zoos in the late 20th century.

The zoo keeps only animals that appear to thrive in captivity and their enclosures are designed to be as close to an animal's natural habitat as is practically possible. Kitty Ann, one of the zoo's directors, said that their meerkats lived in sand, deep enough to burrow, among scrub trees mirroring the animals' native habitat in South Africa.

The philosophy of the zoo is that young visitors not only see the animals but learn to understand where they live and how they survive. Children

gain knowledge through play and entertaining practical exercises.

Next to the meerkats' enclosure is another sandpit into which the children can, like the animals, burrow as if being chased by a predatory eagle. The children, aged up to 12, emerge at the centre of a clear dome, from which they can see the real animals around them. Near the African wild cats is a pole. "We tell the children that it can jump six feet to catch a bird. So how high can they jump?" Ms Ann said.

The zoo, which has children's board of directors, also uses its animals to teach young people about the environment. Near the penguins

enclosure, young visitors are dressed in flippers, snorkels, and fake fur coats, and are then handed a fishing line.

Drusillas has 200,000 visitors a year. Ms Ann said the most popular activity was linked to the beaver collection and involved pulling a rope with levers and weights through a hole. "They can see how much pulling power a beaver has when it is handling a log, or a fox when it is attacking a rabbit."

The zoo is planning an exhibition about North American Indians this year. Children will not only learn about Indian culture but how different animals, such as the buffalo, the beaver and the salmon, shaped tribal lives.



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Promises leave Moscow cold

FROM ROBIN LODGE
IN MOSCOW

ANDREI GUSEV, 58, a Moscow caretaker, has heard many speeches in his time from many leaders and yesterday's performance by President Yeltsin did little to impress him.

"Nothing new" was his verdict. "They all make the same promises, but in the end the ordinary people like me just keep on getting screwed."

Mr Gusev's views were echoed by many others yesterday in Moscow. "He told us last year that pensioners would get their money. He promised to deal with crime, but nothing has changed," said Valentina Davydova, a retired schoolteacher. "Of course, he has been sick, but something should have been done."

"He spoke well," said Vladimir Pilyugin, a businessman. "But we will have to see if there are any results."

Few had taken the trouble to watch the state of the nation address broadcast live on state television. "What did I need to watch for?" asked Olga Gorbulova, 22. "I know what he said: everything is fine, all problems will be solved, we are building democracy. Maybe I will watch on the news tonight, but then, maybe not."

Those that did see the speech agreed that Mr Yeltsin looked fit and appeared to have recovered all his old vigour. Even the phlegmatic Mr Gusev agreed that he had been impressed by the President's recovery. "We are a tough people, but I must say I was surprised. When he went to hospital last time, I thought that's it. But just look at him."

By all accounts, the President is taking his doctors' advice seriously, although some of them have described him as "a difficult patient", and his decision to make a slow return to public life appears to have paid off.

Yeltsin vows fresh drive to root out corruption

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

PRESIDENT Yeltsin served notice yesterday that he was back in control of Russia when he delivered a forceful address pledging to shake up his Cabinet, push through economic reforms and crack down on corruption.

After eight months plagued by illness, the Russian leader appeared finally to have regained his health, when he delivered a 25-minute speech in commanding style to a joint session of parliament.

In a brutally honest assessment of the state of the nation, the Kremlin leader described a country where officials were corrupt, workers were unpaid, the military was crumbling and relations with the West were reaching a crisis point.

"Having built a new political system, we have stuck mid-way," he said in the annual address, broadcast live nationwide. "We have left the old shore but we are floundering in a stream of problems. The stream is carrying us away from the new shore."

He said one of his first moves to rectify the situation would be to reshuffle the Government and bring in "competent, vigorous people". It is probable that Anatoli Chubais, the presidential Chief of Staff, will

be promoted to a new post in charge of the economy and that Yegor Gaidar, the liberal former Prime Minister, may make a comeback.

"One of the main faults of the Russian authorities at all levels is corruption," the President said. "It provides the spawning ground for most economic crimes. We should not have any untouchable individuals. If the tracks of a crime lead to high office, you must act resolutely and strictly in accordance with law."

He also drew attention to unpaid wages and pensions, issues which he vowed to tackle during last year's presidential election campaign.

Similarly, he promised "fundamental decisions" to push through urgently needed reforms in the armed forces,

which have been left to collapse in spite of repeated promises to turn the military into a professional force.

One of the most urgent issues on President Yeltsin's agenda is Nato's planned expansion eastwards. Yesterday the Kremlin leader reiterated his opposition to the move and warned the West of the dangers of isolating Russia.

For most Russians, the importance of the speech was more in its delivery than in its contents. Most of the problems raised by President Yeltsin have been left unresolved.

Of more immediate interest was the fact that the Russian leader finally appeared ready to resume his duties, which were effectively suspended after an illness last July, followed by an open heart bypass operation in November and finally an attack of pneumonia in January.

"I saw a tough Yeltsin, exactly the man we adored in 1987," said Yuri Luzhkov, the Mayor of Moscow and a Yeltsin loyalist. Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party leader, described the address as "miserable, helpless buffoonery without any real content".

Yeltsin yesterday put emphasis on efficiency



Lech Wałęsa breaks bread with fellow strikers at the Gdańsk shipyard when the Solidarity union was born in the Eighties. The movement shook communism and marked a European turning point

Polish crisis looms as shipyard cradle of Solidarity is closed

BY ROGER BOYES

THE axe fell yesterday on the Gdańsk shipyard, birthplace of Poland's Solidarity revolution and site of one of Europe's great historic turning points. Workers — most of them young men who were infants when the 1980s strike at the yard fatally weakened communism in the Soviet bloc — were told that all efforts to save the financially sick enterprise had failed.

"I have to dismiss everyone," said Wiesław Szaj, the official receiver. "From today we are beginning the process of sacking 3,800 workers." The closure of the yard is set to provoke a political crisis.

The decision to declare bankruptcy last summer, and to close down the yard now, was taken by the post-Communist Government.

As far as the workers are concerned, the Government — though calling itself Social Democrat — has inherited the

prejudices and principles of its Soviet bloc forefathers. "Communist pigs — hands off the yard" reads the banner strung across the main entrance.

Solidarity, which has remodelled itself from an orthodox trade union into the most potent force in the Centre

to lead the 1980s strikes — and after he was defeated in his attempt to win a second term as Polish President, he promised to return to his job as an electrician. He did return, though only for a few minutes long enough for a photo opportunity to embarrass the Government into awarding

the yard has been bleeding subsidies. It also argued that declaring the yard bankrupt last summer was not an attempt at closure, but a way of making it a more attractive purchase for any foreign investors.

A German shipowner ordered five ships, but the Polish PKO bank refused to grant a \$100 million (£62 million) loan to carry out these and other contracts. The yard's debts now exceed \$136 million and further credit has been refused.

□ Seoul: Lech Wałęsa will lecture as an honorary professor on labour relations at Korea University twice a year from May, school officials said. South Korea was rocked by three weeks of nationwide strikes in December and January, triggered by a new labour law that made mass layoffs easier. More stoppages are threatened. (AP)

Walesa returned for a few minutes to embarrass the Government into awarding him a pension

Right of Polish politics, will take up the cause of the yard, and unless there is a last-minute rescue it is likely to radicalise the political climate ahead of general elections in the autumn.

The most famous worker in the yard was Lech Wałęsa — who clambered over the fence

him a presidential pension. It is not clear what role he will play in fighting for the yard. Certainly, there is no great love of him in the workforce. Many believe that he has deserted his former shipyard colleagues.

The Government, which has a 60 per cent stake, says

Uproar as body of forgotten girl found

FROM CHARLES BREMNER
IN BRUSSELS

BELGIANS vented their anger against judicial authorities yesterday after the belated discovery of the body of a nine-year-old girl by police investigating child murders.

The remains of Loubna Benaisse were found in a steel trunk buried among car parts at a filling station in the Brussels district of Ixelles, yards from the supermarket where she disappeared in 1992. Patrick Deroche, 33, the garage owner's son and a convicted child molester, had confessed to her murder and was in custody, officials said.

Hundreds of people laid white flowers and candles at the site as the media and politicians gave vent to their outrage over the authorities' failure to take proper action when the girl vanished. "Once again, we are confronted with lamentable judicial behaviour," Le Soir said.

Loubna became a household name in the aftermath of the August arrest of Marc Dutroux, the paedophile being held on suspicion of murdering four girls and kidnapping at least two others. The discovery of her remains was announced by Jean-Luc Dehaene, the Prime Minister, whose Government has been rocked by disclosures of police bungling.

A new child-murder team reopened the Loubna investigation last autumn and found her remains after a tip-off.



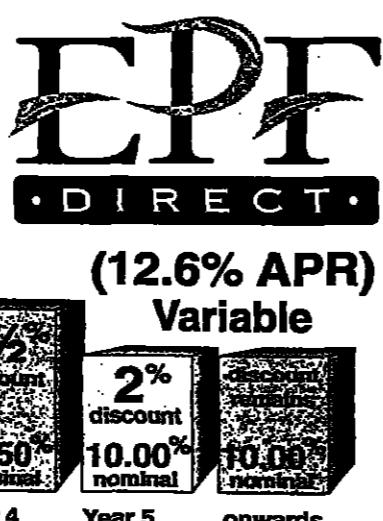
Loubna: remains found buried at garage

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President hosts round-table talks with Opposition to find solution for Albanian crisis

Tirana grants truce to let rebels hand over looted arms

FROM TOM WALKER IN TIRANA

THE Albanian Government said yesterday that army operations in the South would be suspended from this morning, and declared a two-day amnesty to enable citizens and rebels to hand back weapons stolen from armories in the past week.

Whether the measure would have a calming effect on the state of anarchy was unclear. The announcement came after five hours of talks between the Opposition and Sali Berisha, but the Albanian President gave little sign that he would offer any political concessions.

Mr Berisha did not sign the joint statement and its validity remained in doubt. Nevertheless, it did have the apparent support of Tritan Shehu, the Foreign Minister and Deputy Prime Minister.

The round-table meeting, held at the Presidency, was the first real political dialogue since a state of emergency was declared on Sunday. But Albania remains a deeply divided country, with police and Shik secret agents holding the population of the North in fear, and rebels, sometimes supported by defecting army units, consolidating their control over swathes of the South.

President Berisha refused to comment on opposition demands that a temporary "technical" government be formed, which would give opposition parties ministerial posts.

"It's difficult to sum up what he said exactly," Skender Gjinushi, head of the Social Democratic Party, noted. "But in the end the only thing we were agreed upon was that the bloodshed must be stopped."

Paskal Milo, another Social Democrat, said "only seven minutes" of the meeting were devoted to formulating a political solution to the crisis. The talks are scheduled to be reconvened at the weekend; on the agenda will be the critical issue of voting in a new Prime Minister to replace Aleksander Meksi, who was dismissed last Saturday.



Berisha refused to make concessions

American military commanders in Germany are preparing plans to evacuate more than 1,600 Americans living in Albania, a US European command spokesman said yesterday (Our Foreign Staff writes).

In Britain, the Foreign Office advised against visits to Albania for the time being and urged British citizens and their dependants now in Albania to leave if their presence was not essential.

In the lawless South yesterday, rebel groups in stolen tanks careened through the streets, and the death toll rose as a result of accidental shootings and tragic pranks. A tank stolen in Sarande lay in a ditch, a 13-year-old blew himself up and a 25-year-old man was shot while posing for international camera crews. At least 20 people have died in the past week. "It's Mad Max country down there," noted one diplomat.

State radio and independent witnesses reported that rebels had partly blown up a key road bridge between Sarande and Gjirokaster, cutting off

the army's one significant southern base from the rebel-held belt extending from Sarande and Delvine northwards to Vlore.

An American diplomat said there was little prospect of the army regaining control of the region, given its lack of firepower and poor discipline. Its conscripts are paid \$2 (£1.24) a month and have little incentive to risk their lives.

The Government also announced on state radio that warrants had been issued for the arrest of Edmond Zhupani, the main naval commander, and five other officers wanted is stationed in Vlore.

The announcement seemed to be more bluster than any real threat to the disaffected Albanian military. The Government also said it wanted Italy to extradite the two pilots who defected in an elderly MiG on Wednesday: the two have sought political asylum.

In the capital, Tirana, the reopening of political dialogue did little to restore faith in the Government. The German Embassy was said to have advised its citizens, including aid workers, to leave the country, and Swiss Air reported a rush of bookings.

Diplomats here agree that the coming days will be crucial if the Balkan state is to be rescued from the brink of a civil war. They are worried that factionalism within the Socialist Party, the main opposition bloc, could play into President Berisha's hands.

Opposition leaders said they were pinning their hopes on Western intervention. "We need Europe and the United States to support us," Neritan Ceka, head of the opposition Democratic Alliance, said.

He said the issue of a "technical government" could be raised by the Council of Europe at its meeting with President Berisha today. It is the first of several international delegations to be visiting Tirana in coming days.



David Smiley, left, photographed with Billy McLean in Albania during the Second World War, and at his west London home yesterday

British war hero backs 'honest' Berisha

BY MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

FEW people have a good word to say for Sali Berisha, the beleaguered Albanian President, but Colonel David Smiley, a friend of many years and a legendary figure in this troubled country, feels he must speak up for him.

"I feel very sad for him. I knew Albania when it was a feudal state, when there were no shops and no restaurants and the only cars belonged to Communist leaders. Now there are shops, restaurants and hotels, and there are too many cars on the road. Sali Berisha has achieved this."

Colonel Smiley, 81 next month, was one of the daring undercover British officers from the Special Operations Executive (SOE) who parachuted into Albania in 1943 to fight the Germans and Italians alongside the Communists partisans, and again in 1944, that time with the nationalists in the north when there was a civil war raging. He is one of the last survivors of Operation Consensus 1 and 2. Two of his SOE colleagues were Julian Amery, the late Tory peer, and Neil "Billy" McLean.

In 1949 he was seconded to MI6 for two years to train and arm Albanian agents as part of a secret operation to liberate the country from the Communists and the Soviet

orbit. It failed disastrously, the undercover mission being betrayed to the Russians by Kim Philby.

Colonel Smiley's picture — with those of Amery and McLean — was put up on a wall inside the Pyramid building in Tirana under the label "war criminal". Yet he, as a military adviser to the partisans from April to November 1943, had played a key role in sabotaging the Italian occupying forces and the German Alpine division.

Not that Enver Hoxha, the partisan leader later to become Albania's Communist dictator, ever thanked him. He used to claim that the Russians had saved Albania. "But that was rubbish, it was mainly SOE with some help from OSS [the US Office of Strategic Services, the precursor of the CIA]," Colonel Smiley said.

More than 50 of Colonel Smiley's wartime colleagues died on Albanian soil. It was President Berisha who helped him to find their graves, and a monument was set up.

Colonel Smiley whose book, *Albanian Assignment*, was seen as such an important record of the war that it was translated into Albanian, said: "Berisha is an honest man and I believe he has done his best for his country. When he became President I was angry with him because I thought he should put on trial

all the Communists responsible for torturing and murdering. But he told me he wanted reconciliation, not revenge.

"I feel very sad about what is happening. He has brought so many changes for the good and I think it is unfair that he should be blamed solely for the collapse of the life-savings scheme. But he must try to form a government of national reconciliation."

Colonel Smiley has albums filled with fading photographs from his wartime exploits. His codename was

"Grim" and the Albanians he fought alongside were "Pixies". He became legendary for his expertise in blowing up bridges. He points proudly to a wartime photograph of a demolished bridge, and to the replacement bridge in an album from one of his visits to Albania since Mr Berisha became President.

For years Colonel Smiley was not allowed to talk about his MI6 assignments in 1949. He did not discover that Philby, then MI6 liaison officer in Washington, had betrayed the secret mission until many years later.

It was because of his attachment to MI6 and his SOE exploits that it was assumed it was his name that had been chosen by John le Carré for his character George Smiley, the hero of *Smiley's People*.

However, Colonel Smiley said that the author had never heard of him, and admitted that he had taken the name from the register of pupils at Eton. He was Master at Eton when my two sons were pupils".

Mothering Sundae

Reporter dressed as nun beats press ban

FROM TUNIKU VARADARAJAN
IN MADRID

A SPANISH journalist has disguised herself as a nun to file reports from the southern Albanian town of Vlore, at present still in rebel control.

Cristina López Schlichting, a special correspondent with the Madrid daily ABC, filed an extensive report from the embattled Adriatic port yesterday. The Albanian Government had banned foreign journalists from Vlore on Monday.

Serena López, 32, a mother of three, hit upon her idea when she met the mother superior of Vlore's Franciscan convent at a hotel in Tirana. The elderly nun was keen to return to her besieged community, but reluctant to travel south alone. Serena López offered to accompany her in exchange for the loan of a spare brown habit.

On their drive to Vlore, alarmed soldiers at checkpoints tried repeatedly to stop them. At the last government checkpoint, 30 miles from the rebel-held town, they were detained for several hours before being allowed to proceed. Señora López witnessed soldiers randomly pick out a man from a group of onlookers and thrash him severely. When she tried to intervene, playing the compassionate nun, she was warned to "shut up".

Eventually, they were allowed to proceed, having changed their car — which bore Tirana number plates — for one with plates from Vlore. "They will shoot you on sight with those Tirana plates," a soldier had said. According to Señora López, the soldiers made a pitiful sight — young, poorly armed and fed, and ill disciplined.

In Vlore, the Spanish reporter said hatred was expressed everywhere for President Berisha. Yet the mood, although sullen, was strangely conciliatory. Residents told her that a solution could be reached. A housewife said: "There will be peace if people get their money back, especially the poorest ones who have lost everything."



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German unions urge brake on euro as unemployment rises

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

THE powerful German trade union movement is abandoning its uncritical support for Europe's economic and monetary union (EMU) and will demand a delay in the single currency unless Bonn introduces major job-creation elements in the Maastricht follow-up treaty.

That warning, given yesterday by Dieter Schulte, a trade union chief, marks a fundamental shift in German politics. It came as Germany announced that it was still failing to bring down unemployment. February figures released yesterday showed a rise of 13,600 on January to 4,672,000 — a lower rise than predicted, but nonetheless the highest level of unemployment since the 1930s. The jobless rate was 12.2 per cent — among the worst in Europe. The jobless figure was 401,500 more than in February 1996, the Labour Office said.

The total out of work in western

Germany, the country's economic motor, decreased slightly — from 3,263,000 in January to 3,257,000. Unemployment in the former East Germany rose to 1,414,000 — up 21,800 on January.

"The government coalition should not believe that it can buy its entry ticket to Maastricht at the cost of ordinary people," said Herr Schulte, chairman of the German Trade Union Federation. "I am speaking for the majority of voters who will be deciding on the Government's future in 1998." Until now the unions' line has been that monetary union offered more opportunities than risks. "But the trade union federation can no longer accept that the Maastricht criteria for 1999 are fulfilled by fiscal and social measures which operate exclusively at the cost of employees." The support of the unions for the current EMU schedule would depend on "binding commitments" on employment and

social issues to be written in to the revised Maastricht treaty.

Economic figures released this week do not suggest that Germany is heading for the kind of miraculous recovery that would turn around the job market. The federal statistics office indicated that the German economy expanded by 0.1 per cent in the fourth quarter of last year, and the first quarter of this year will also record very sluggish growth, say economists. The only sign of recovering confidence is in export orders, pushed along by the relative weakness of the mark against the dollar. Domestic consumption is still weak and the building sector is in deep trouble.

High unemployment, by pushing Germany further away from the Maastricht targets, inevitably prompts talk of delaying EMU. But it also weakens Germany's bargaining position as it seeks to bar other states from joining the currency union's first wave.



Men wait in line outside an employment office in Berlin. Unemployment rose last month to the highest figure since the 1930s



Chirac ally faces sleaze inquiry

Paris: Jean Tiberi, Mayor of Paris and ally of President Chirac, has been placed under formal legal investigation alongside his wife on suspicion of misusing public funds (Ben Macintyre writes).

M. Tiberi, the most senior Gaullist to face a corruption inquiry since M Chirac came to power, said he was innocent and would not resign.

The sleaze investigation is a blow to the ruling Gaullist RPR party, which is reeling from accusations that its coffers were lined with bribes paid in exchange for city building contracts when M Chirac was Mayor and M Tiberi was his deputy in charge of the housing office.

The case against the Tibéri revolved around a brief written in 1994 for a regional council by Xavière Tiberi for which she was allegedly paid Fr200,000 (£25,000).

Protest at border screening

**FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN
IN MADRID**

BRITAIN protested to the Spanish authorities last night over their harassment of a group of Gibraltar schoolchildren who were denied entry to Spain.

The schoolchildren, aged between nine and 12, were delayed for several hours by Spanish border police, who refused to let them cross into Spain on the ground that their collective passport issued in Gibraltar was "an invalid travel document".

The British Embassy in Madrid said in statement: "The use of children to pursue political aims is not an acceptable way of conducting business between fellow members of the European Union."

The rough treatment, which happened on Sunday, comes barely a month after Abel Matutes, the Spanish Foreign Minister, promised Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, that Spain would "respect the validity of all travel documents issued in Gibraltar". This latest incident at the border appears to be a breach of that undertaking.

A Gibraltar government official deplored the "ill-treatment of our little children". He said: "We allow Spanish schoolchildren into Gibraltar on collective passports. Only a week ago 90 of them visited the Rock on a single Spanish collective passport."

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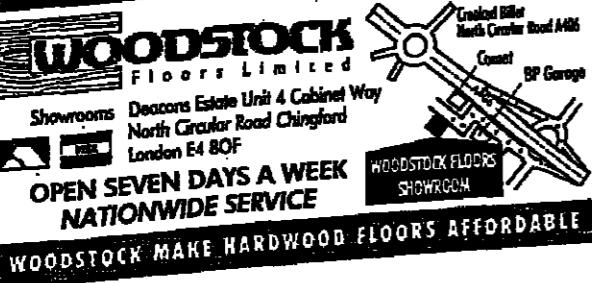
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Hutu militia flees as Zairean town hails rebel victory

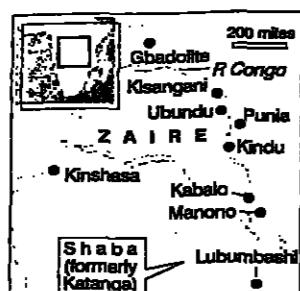
FROM SAM KILEY IN PUNIA

STARVING Hutu children, their skin hanging from their backsides like baggy pyjamas, tottered into a stinking barn for a last bowl of porridge before hitting the road on the orders of extremist leaders prepared to march them literally into the ground.

Since east Zaire's rebels overran their refugee camps in South Kivu province, hundreds of thousands of Rwandan Hutu civilians have been wandering in the vast tropical wilderness for four months. They have been herded as human shields by their own army and militia for more than 500 miles.

"We don't know where we are going, nor why any more. Many have died in the forests of disease and hunger," Jean Kanyamukene, a former agronomy student from southern Rwanda, said.

The 4,027 tired and hungry refugees in the group moved as if in slow motion as they prepared yesterday to leave Punia, about halfway between Kinshasa and Kisangani in the north. The Hutu militia leaders had ordered them to march on as the rebel force approached the town. From the air thousands of others could be seen heading north in a miserable line along a dirt road towards Kisangani. Zairean officials said they would be stopped from enter-



ing the city and settled by the riverside town of Ubundu.

The rebel group, the Alliance of Forces for Liberation Congo-Zaire led by Laurent Kabila, has seized most of Zaire east of the River Congo. Punia, on their route to Kisangani, will fall without a fight.

The local population is pleased that the Hutu militia, responsible for the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda, is leaving. They had complained incessantly about the presence of the militia whom they fear more than the rebels or government soldiers, who have a reputation for looting.

□ Nairobi: Kenya is to host a summit on the Zairean conflict on March 19 but Mr Kabila will not be invited, the Foreign Ministry said yesterday. Zaire's ailing President Mobutu has been asked to attend the one-day talks with President Mandela of South Africa and five other African heads of state. (Reuters)



Peter Berry begins his journey back to Blighty yesterday. He was one of 53 retiring civil servants and their families who took advantage of an old Empire perk to return by sea at the end of an assignment overseas

First wave of expats embarks for home

FROM AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
IN HONG KONG

A GROUP of expatriate civil servants and their families set sail for Britain yesterday aboard a luxury cruise ship, leaving Hong Kong before the colony's handover to China in July.

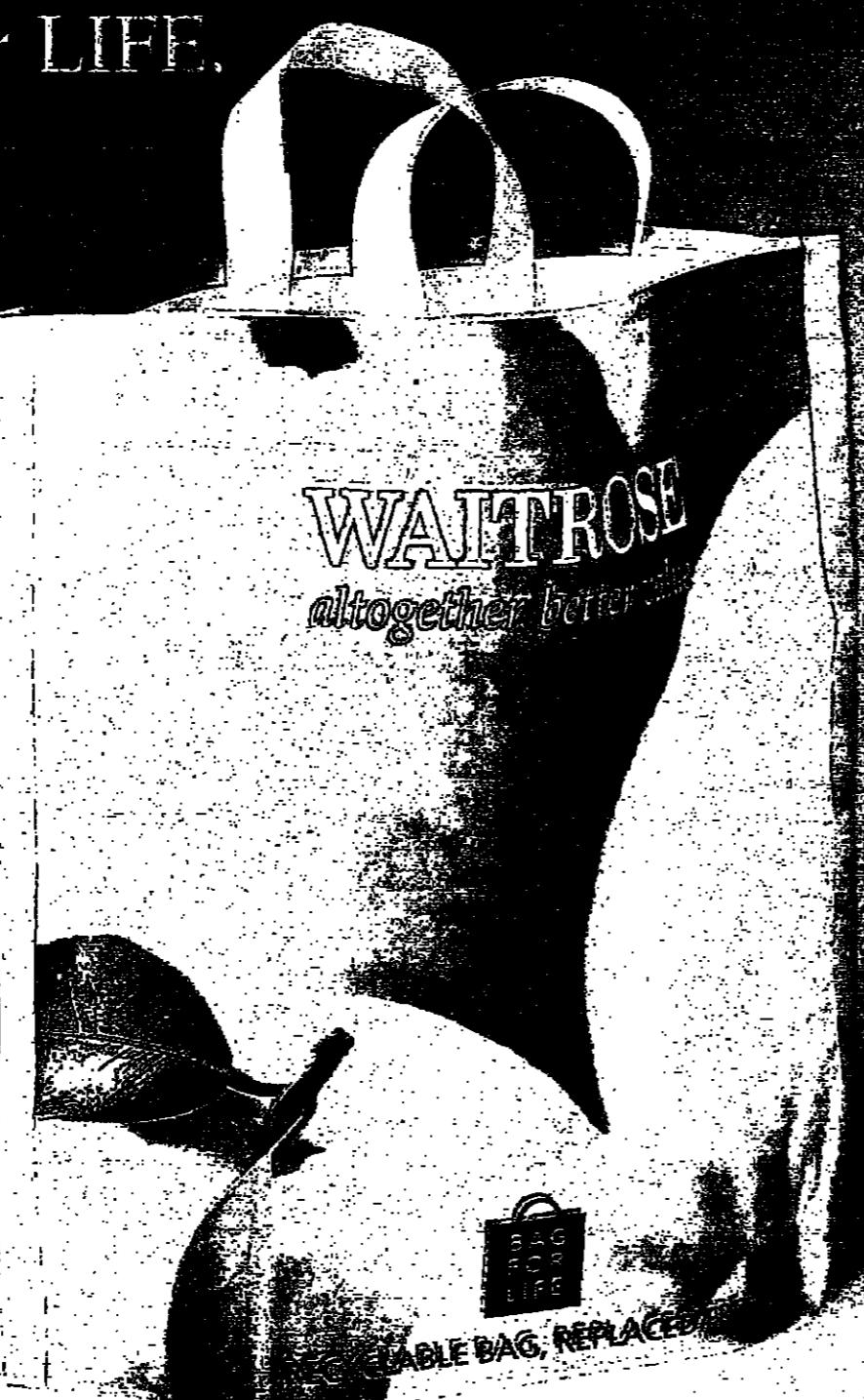
The group of 53 boarded the *Oriana*, enjoying a perk from Empire days under which members of Her Majesty's Overseas Civil Service could return to Britain by sea when their assignment ended. In a scene to delight television documentary-makers who fill Hong Kong these days, the 69,000-tonne white giant was nudged by tugs into the centre of the harbour, gleaming in the sun's dying rays and framed by the territory's famous skyline.

Berthed alongside the *Oriana* was the Cunard flagship, the *QE2* which will pick up a second group of more than 100 retiring civil servants and their families tomorrow.

To some of those heading home, they were returning to a country that after many years seemed almost an alien place with a chilly climate and violent crime. "I've been here for 31 years, and had a fabulous time," said Len Sayer. "My kids were born here, for them Hong Kong is their home."

Hong Kong has earmarked almost £1 million to send British civil servants back to Blighty this year.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

213 die in Tamil Tiger onslaught

Colombo: Military officials reported yesterday that 213 people were killed as Tamil Tiger guerrillas overran a military base and an airfield in eastern Sri Lanka (Our Foreign Staff write). At least 160 guerrillas and 49 soldiers died and an air force plane was destroyed.

The simultaneous attacks were the heaviest since January 9, when 223 soldiers and 350 guerrillas were killed. Britain is to provide £4 million for relief efforts for up to 200,000 people affected by the civil war.

Bhutto delay

Karachi: A Pakistani court ordered the arrest of Abdullah Shah, a former Sind province Chief Minister, and two police officials as it postponed the trial of Benazir Bhutto's husband. (AFP)

Software arrests

Los Angeles: US authorities say they have cracked a software counterfeiting ring, arresting Chinese nationals and seizing more than £3.7 million in pirated Microsoft programs and \$3 million cash. (AP)

Guyana mourns

Georgetown: President Jagan of Guyana died of heart problems in hospital in Washington, aged 78. The Prime Minister, Samuel Hinds, was sworn in as his successor. (AP) Obituary, page 23

Nepal defeat

Kathmandu: King Birendra accepted the resignation of the Nepali Prime Minister, Sher Bahadur Deuba, after his centre-right coalition lost a parliamentary vote of confidence. (Reuters)

Paris hotel sale

Paris: The Sultan of Brunei's family said it had bought the Plaza Athenee luxury hotel in Paris. The British Granada group announced the sale on Monday, at an asking price of £45 million. (Reuters)

Abductor's death

Beijing: Han Fudong, 80, who as a young soldier helped to abduct Chiang Kai-shek, the Nationalist Chinese leader, to force an alliance with the Communist Party to fight the Japanese, has died. (AP)



Egypt set to tighten its controls on militant preachers

By CHRISTOPHER WALKER, MIDDLE EAST CORRESPONDENT

EGYPT promised yesterday to intensify its crackdown on maverick Islamic clerics and to complete plans to control the country's 55,000 mosques and all Muslim preachers within five years.

The pledge, by Mahmoud Hamdi Zakzouk, the Religious Endowments Minister, was a tightening of the screw on the militant Gamaa al-Islamiya (Islamic group) which took up arms against President Mubarak's moderate Islamic regime in 1992, threatening to turn Egypt into a second Iran.

The simultaneous attacks were the heaviest since January 9, when 223 soldiers and 350 guerrillas were killed. Britain is to provide £4 million for relief efforts for up to 200,000 people affected by the civil war.

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The simultaneous attacks were the heaviest since January 9, when

China developers gave Clinton aide cash for campaign

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON



Hubbell: took money from Indonesians

A FORMER senior aide to President Clinton was paid more than \$400,000 (£248,000) in total by a dozen companies, including the backers of a \$2 billion American-Chinese property development in China which received the endorsement of the Clinton Administration.

Webster Hubbell, one of Mr Clinton's closest friends who was forced to resign in 1994 as Associate Attorney-General to face criminal charges stemming from the Whitewater inquiry, accepted payments from companies controlled by the Riady family of Indonesia at about the same time as the Administration gave its backing to the development in China's Fujian province. *The New York Times* said.

Details of the payments have emerged during a whirlwind of charges that the White House broke federal rules on raising election funds and, even more seriously, that it allowed foreign companies and governments to influence the Administration's policy in return for cash contributions. Donations and payments by Chinese companies have come under particular scrutiny, against a background of tension in United States-China relations.

Revelations about Democratic fundraising techniques are emerging daily, partly because congressional committees have secured access to White House documents. However, the new details about Mr Hubbell and the Ryads have the potential to be particularly embarrassing to President Clinton. They may establish that some of the main figures in the Whitewater investigation into questionable property deals in Arkansas, which dogged Mr Clinton throughout his first term, also have a central role in the present controversy about fundraising.

It was reported months ago that Mr Hubbell was paid \$100,000 by companies controlled by the Riady family, for reasons that have not yet come to light. The new details suggest that payments were four times the level previously thought and flowed from a large number of companies.

Some of those companies were guests at White House coffee mornings or stayed as overnight guests in the Lincoln Bedroom. The question of whether these opportunities for meeting the President were implicitly ways of soliciting money is at the heart of the controversy.



Cambodian police force Manfred Gast to show his face to photographers in Phnom Penh yesterday and, below, one of his alleged victims

'Child sex gangster' held in Cambodia

FROM AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE
IN PHNOM PENH

A CANADIAN national arrested on child prostitution charges is a member of a "well organised, international" paedophile ring, Cambodian police claimed yesterday.

Manfred Horst Albert Gast, 53, who was born in Germany but lives in Alberta, Canada, was arrested in a Phnom Penh guest house after six boys alleged that he had had sex with them,

police said. They displayed scores of photographs they said were seized from Mr Gast's room, showing young boys in sexually explicit poses. They said they had found more than 200 pictures.

"We believe that he sells these photographs," said Police General Skadavay M Ly Roun, chief of Cambodia's Interpol department, which made the arrest with local police. "It is a well organised and international ring." He said Mr Gast had large sums of money in a Thai bank, possibly earnings from such deals.

Formal charges against Mr Gast are to be made in Phnom Penh municipal court today. Mr Gast claimed he was being mistreated in police custody but police said he was refusing to eat. Mr Gast could face ten to 20 years in prison if convicted.

Children's rights workers have said Cambodia is becoming a haven for child sex offenders as other countries in the region, such as Thailand and the Philippines, have launched anti-child prostitution campaigns.



Colombia rebuffs Clinton on drugs

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

COLOMBIA has halted crop-dusting flights against drugs in an emphatic rebuke to President Clinton.

The measure was approved by President Samper and his associates, who were said to be insulted by Mr Clinton's decision to classify Colombia for the second year as failing to co-operate fully in the war on drugs.

In another embarrassment for the Americans, news leaked out of a hastily organised secret mission to Mexico City by senior White House officials to try to smooth over recriminations between the two Governments

just six weeks before Mr Clinton is due to visit Mexico. The team sent to Mexico by Mr Clinton included Samuel Berger, national security adviser, and Barry McCaffrey, the anti-drugs chief. Their arrival had not been disclosed until a Mexican radio station blew their cover.

Colombia's swift and unexpected move has left Mr Clinton with a foreign policy dilemma. It means the suspension for an unknown period of a drug eradication programme in which crops producing cocaine and heroin were sprayed from the air. The aircraft were largely paid for

by Washington, often with American pilots. Washington had set great store by their success in curbing the flow of cocaine.

Helicopters escorted the flights into areas under the control of left-wing guerrillas. There have been gun battles as those on the ground try to protect the crops.

The main reason for President Clinton's decision to "de-certify" Colombia last week was that, by American calculations, the country's cultivation of coca plants had increased by 32 per cent in the past year. Colombia, the world's largest producer of

cocaine, has now overtaken Bolivia to become the second largest grower.

US critics savage 'Shine' pianist

FROM QUENTIN LETTS
IN NEW YORK

DAVID HELFGOTT, the mentally ill Australian pianist whose remarkable story is told in the hit film *Shine*, has received a vicious drubbing from music critics at the start of a US tour.

Mr Helfgott, 49, has had standing ovations from spectators and is mobbed in the street by autograph hunters. The American public loves him and in a matter of days his list of US engagements has risen from three to 18. From the cushioned "elite" of the concert hall press box, however, there came yesterday a long, loud raspberry about his debut.

The Washington Post accused him of artistic incoherence. "A painful and disturbing experience" was its verdict on Mr Helfgott's performance at the Symphony Hall in Boston. *The New York Times* found "little definition in the playing".

Another critic said that the man was not a musician enough to deserve the privilege of playing in the Symphony Hall. "He sounds like a well-coached child prodigy," grumbled another of what Scott Hicks, the director of *Shine*, called the "self-appointed guardians of the elite".

Boston concertgoers did not mind a hoot. At the end of the show they ran up to the front of the stage and clapped to touch the pianist's long, lean fingers. Nor did they seem to mind the fact that throughout the concert Mr Helfgott talked to himself, grinned like a cat and twirled (he is almost exactly as he was depicted in *Shine* by the actor Geoffrey Rush).

The critics' attacks probably reflected an irritation that the musical agenda has been set by a film and a non-American one at that, and that the high temples of culture are being taken over temporarily by *Shine* populism. American classical music critics tend to be pretty mirthless. Given some of the discordant drive their fraternity has endorsed from the contemporary canon in recent decades, however, it is hard to resist a frisson of satisfaction at seeing their exclusive game spoilt.

Mr Helfgott appears serenely undeterred by the poor notices. "One mustn't be so serious," he said. "It's all a game. Must be grateful."

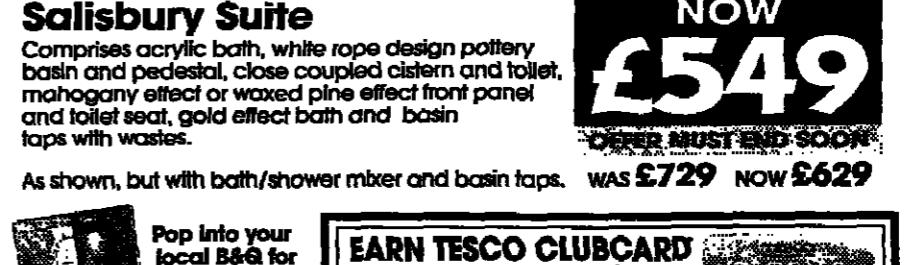
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Claire at 67, still in full bloom

There is an old link between Claire Bloom and the novelist Nina Bawden, in the person of young Richard Burton. When Miss Bawden was up at Oxford, the dashing green-eyed Welshman took her out to a ducorous tea, and swiftly asked her to spend the weekend with him in London, where he had a key to Emlyn Williams's flat. (She declined.)

Six years later Claire Bloom was on tour with Burton. He was newly married to Sybil, but this did not stop him from embarking on a snatched, ecstatic affair with Claire (her first) that lasted six thrilling years: "Delicious and impossible and forbidden."

Forty years on, Miss Bloom, now 67, and Miss Bawden, 72, met on the set of *Family Money*, the dramatisation of Bawden's novel, which starts on Channel 4 next week starring Bloom. They discussed how amazingly beautiful Burton was in youth, nor yet pock-marked, and what an extraordinary, magnetic personality.

Burton still has this effect on people: Bloom's almost inaudibly soft voice becomes animated when she talks of him. She still has a recording of his reading of Donne. "He was one of those Svengali types who like to teach you and mould you; he knew reams and reams of poetry." When, years later, Burton told her that being married to Liz Taylor was "like waking up to Christmas every day", Bloom felt a murderous urge.

The last time we met three years ago, she was playing Madame Ranevskaya in snow-covered Cambridge, Massachusetts. In the luminous winter light she was fragilely beautiful and disquietingly reticent, which made me gabbled on. Only later did I discover that she was going through hell. I knew that her marriage to Philip Roth had disintegrated, but did not realise quite how painful it was. That's when she embarked on her autobiography, *Leaving A Doll's House*. "I had to have a big project to keep me from thinking about anything."

It is almost too obvious to decode the masochism in her well-written book: damaged childhood (ineffectual father, who abandoned his family); feelings of being an outsider ("the English rose who always felt very Jewish"); an almost too devoted mother. Claire was already a film star at 17, destined to become the tragic heroines she played, submitting to three neurotic husbands. She left Roth

The indestructibly beautiful Claire Bloom on her undying passion for Burton — and her latest venture on Channel 4

Steiger-like Nora in *A Doll's House*, in order to become Hillard Elkins's Blanche du Bois in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. When she met Philip Roth, she might have known that a man already seething with rage about having been trapped in his previous marriage would soon see the again "in paroxysms of silent anger". She noted the warning signals. "But of course," she writes, "the situation made me terribly overdependent, and it took me many, many years to find myself as an adult female."

Perhaps that was the reason I clung to relationships, after they should have finished."

Roth bestrides her life, but other men line up in her story: Olivier, Yul Brynner, even Elvis, from whom she fled. We do not discuss "The Unmentionable" second husband, Hillard Elkins, a dull, weepy wife named Claire. I am not the first to express incredulity that she failed to see that he would be impossible.

"Yes..." says Claire, sighing. "But you always think it's going to be different. And there were also very wonderful times. In the main it was an enriching relationship. She was very confused. I could never have foreseen the end. He became a different person, somebody I couldn't have lived with for two minutes."

At the end, her fax machine spewed out wicked bills from him, demanding repayment for their holidays together, for the hours (at \$150 an hour) he spent advising her on scripts.

He became capricious to the point of insanity, calling her back with flowers and messages and then dumping divorce papers on her, accusing her of cruelty and inhumanity. Astonishingly, even after all these torments, she describes a dream of returning to the Con-

necticut farmhouse they had shared, and finding everything the same.

"It was the truth. I was full of longing to return to the domestic hearth, with the fire crackling, the life I'd had, which had gone. But that door was closed."

Such an unrealistic neediness may stem, she thinks, from her bizarrely close relationship with her mother. "She was a most remarkable woman. But there is a downside: her support made me terribly overdependent, and it took me many, many years to find myself as an adult female."

In the opening scene, where Fran is beaten up in the street, we see her leaving the cinema and dining alone in a restaurant. I found this unlikely, but Claire Bloom does it a lot in New York: "I often go for spaghetti and a glass of wine at the pasta place across the street, and I find it comforting to take my book to a coffee-shop full of people."

Does she go alone to movies in New York? "Yes! it's 1997! Good God, I'm not going to wait for a millionaire to take me out. I prefer to go to museums by myself too, I can concentrate better."

I'm going to *Lohengrin* by myself tonight. Opera is my one great passion."

In London, she was staying at her daughter's house — Anna, now an opera singer, was away in Palermo — and seeing her brother John, a film editor (*Gandhi*, *First Wives' Club*), and her friend Gata Servadio.

When we last met she had just found herself an apartment in New York. It was a momentous juncture ("I had to have somewhere to live, to get back a normal life"), since when she has established a singleton's routine, embracing the health club, Central Park, the Society Library, with its peaceful reading room, "the nearest thing to the London Library", friends and work.

As she approaches the aunts-and-dowagers age — she was only 49 when she played the matriarch Lady Marchmain in *Brideshead Revisited*, "and it would have been bloody stupid to turn that down on narcissistic grounds" — she now does one-woman concoctions of Shakespeare's *Women and Women in Love*. She also does a four-hour reading from *Anna Karenina*. (There is a touch of Karenin in Roth; and Claire would certainly have fallen for a Vronsky.)

"People say, 'don't you wish you'd had an easier time?', but what's the point of that? Things happened as they did, and I got a lot from them. You can't say what if... What if does not exist."

That's one reason I am astonished to find myself quite alone and doing all right — like Fran. As I say to myself: "Considering everything that's happened, you're doing as well as you can."

She laughs, and her dark eyes no longer look wistful.

• *Family Money* starts on March 16, Channel 4, 9pm.



The prime of Miss Claire Bloom: "I am astonished to find myself quite alone and doing all right"



THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW

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Pop groups should not make comebacks, says Fiona Russell Powell

Survivors of the lamé army



Top: Fiona Russell Powell
Above: ABC started life in Sheffield as Vice Versa

For the past month, posters have been plastered all over London advertising tonight's comeback gig at the Shepherd's Bush Empire of the 1980s pop group, ABC. The lead singer, Martin Fry, is shown with a gold lamé jacket slung over his shoulder: a reference to the days in 1982 when ABC wore similar suits and had a platinum-selling album, *Lexicon Of Love*. Where he got his current lamé suit is a mystery, as he ceremoniously flushed the original down the toilet in a Japanese hotel at the end of the band's world tour. How do I know this? Because Stephen Singleton, the founder member of ABC, told me. He will not be on stage tonight and nor will I, although I, too, was once a member of ABC, masquerading under the name of Eden, while working as a journalist for *The Face*.

In fact Martin Fry is now the only remaining member of ABC, aided by Glenn Gregory of Heaven 17. During the past few years, I and other former ABC members had noticed that Martin seemed to have rewritten the history of the band. The way he tells it, ABC was his idea. Not so. ABC started life as Vice Versa, a Sheffield electronic three-piece formed by Singleton (sax and rhythm guitar) and Mark White (guitar).

One day, Stephen and Mark rang a Mandurian student, who had interviewed them for his fanzine, and asked him to step in at the last minute to replace the 16-year-old member who had chickened out of her first gig. I was the chicken, he was Martin Fry. In 1980 they changed the musical direction of the band and the name to ABC, and brought in drummer David Palmer and bassist David Robinson.

The next three years saw ABC on the rise, gaining critical and popular acclaim with their trademark funk/pop, only to blow it all in 1983 with a heavier release that many found hard to understand, *Beauty Stab*.

David Palmer was the first to go. During a gig at Hammersmith Palais, he broke into an impromptu and brilliant 15-minute drum solo. "It was only after he left that we realised it had been his audition for The Yellow Magic

Orchestra," said Stephen, who left after rows with Martin over *Beauty Stab*.

I remained friends with everyone, and in the summer of 1984 went round to Martin and Mark's Holland Park flat to hear what they had been working on. It had the promise of another hit album. They said: "We'd like you to join the band." "But I can't play anything." I pointed out. "It doesn't matter. You can pretend. We want you because you've got a great look."

At the time, I was Miss Nightclub Queen, wearing clothes made by my friends Leigh Bowery and John Galliano, with a number one crew cut and a great collection of wigs and platform shoes. It was a freaky, original image and one that they wanted the new-look ABC to have. An American, David Yarritu, a bold homosexual midget, completed the four-piece.

I joined ABC for several

years. The money was enticing and I wanted to experience the music industry from the inside. But perhaps the principal expectation I had was one of non-stop fun. And we did have some laughs, at first.

However, the British public did not take kindly to the new image, comparing us to The Addams Family. It was a different story in America though, where the LP did very well. We also had a number one dance record. Things began to go pear-shaped when Martin disappeared. All became clear in September 1985, when we flew to LA to do the US versions of *Top Of The Pops*. Martin arrived at Heathrow looking ghastly. It turned out he had Hodgkin's disease. He could only perform after being pumped full of drugs. The rest of the time he was in bed. Mark, whom I had known since I was 15, now required an appointment before I could see him. David

Yarritu had been sacked as he had grown too big for his tiny boots. Everything fizzled out and they decided my services were no longer needed.

I did not hear from Martin again until he rang me about this article. I expressed my opinions about defunct bands reforming. I find it rather sad as it flies in the face of our youthful ideals. "I am not a sad man," Martin declared emphatically.

So why is he going on the road after all this time (14 years since he played live, six since the last LP)? "Because I'm passionate about it. I believe in these songs." I've heard the new album, *Skyscraping*, and my immediate reaction was: time warp. It's as if the past ten years haven't happened.

I shall be down at the front tonight but probably not singing along. I joked to Martin that I'll wear my gold lamé suit. "Fi, it takes balls to wear one of those. The lamé army. We're survivors."

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The McAlpine memoirs: Day Five — An awful job, school and his opinion of two colleagues

'I hated my time on the Arts Council'

ARTS AND THE LOTTERY

For a period I was on the Arts Council and I have never disliked anything so much. Norman St John-Stevens, now Lord St John of Fawsley, was leant on by Margaret Thatcher and forced to appoint me. He was, he said, like appointing an atheist to the Bench of Bishops. He was right, of course, as I have always held the view that the whole of that organisation should be closed permanently. It seems to me a most expensive way of giving away money. I have always advocated that the great national companies and galleries be given their grants direct from the Treasury and that they should be given pretty much whatever they need, for you either want to have great

national companies and galleries, or you do not. Keeping them perpetually short of money is achieving neither a real economy, nor the point of having these institutions in the first place.

As for the avant-garde arts, I would simply give the cash, if it must be given, to local councils. They are just as capable of distributing it as the members of the Arts Council, for the backing of artistic talent is a lottery. To the funds that are distributed, this could be added the money saved by abolishing the Arts Council.

Industry should be encouraged to help the arts in the regions where it operates just as industries help politics and charity in those regions. It is good business sense to do this and needs no subsidies. As for individuals, there should be no tax incentive for them to buy art, as is the system in America, for one person's tax incentive is another person's tax increase.

Confessions of THATCHER'S BAGMAN

been seen in years. The whole idea is not only daft and dubious, but it will lead Britain's people straight back to a dependence on the handouts of the nanny state, this time with the nanny heavily disguised as the National Lottery. Its funds, however, will be controlled, albeit at second hand, by ministers and the taxpayer will still pay in the end.

I hated my time on the Arts Council, an organisation that struck me as having little to do with the arts. The meetings were tedious, the chairman, Kenneth Robinson, a former Labour Minister of Health, was pedestrian. I found the staff both arrogant and idle. I was chairman at meetings of the sub-committee of theatrical touring, and the two officials sitting either side of the used to pass notes to each other behind my back and then giggle girlishly, which I

suppose was only to be expected from one of them, who was a girl. I ignored their rudeness for several meetings but then I decided to put a stop to it. I moved my chair back from the table. They did the same, and continued with their notes. I moved again, and so it went on. Children in kindergartens would have known better how to conduct themselves. There was something terribly childish about these officials, in their grand Piccadilly premises, tossing sweets to artists. They spoke of artists as "clients" and of their work as "product".

It was never satisfactorily explained to me why the touring committee should spend money on a tour of *Oklahoma*, for if one show did not need a subsidy it was that. At the same time as they enthused about Rodgers and Hammerstein's musical, the officials wanted to halt the touring of the Glyndebourne opera. I could not stop the former folly, but I did put a stop to the latter, and Glyndebourne continued to tour.

Extract from *Once A Jolly Bagman* by Alistair McAlpine (Alistair McAlpine, 1997), published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson on March 13, at £20. Times readers can buy *Once A Jolly Bagman* for just £16 (a saving of £4) by calling The Times Bookshop, 0990 134550

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cious and extremely attractive widow Olga Polizzi. He was doing just this when a former boyfriend of Olga's arrived to try to effect a reconciliation. Richard Connolly, a large but elegant Irishman, was furious to find Lamont in her house. Their row ended in a brawl and trying desperately to escape, using his red dispatch box as protection, Lamont

received a blow to the eye. He explained his swollen face by saying he had walked into a filing cabinet. The press, however, was told another story.

The minister had been seen

hanging around Bayswater Road, shouting abuse at Connolly, who was apparently giving as good as he was getting.

Margaret Thatcher was intrigued by this story and asked me for the truth. She laughed and laughed. "The whole thing is quite Gilbertian," she remarked. When asked does Margaret Thatcher have a sense of humour, I always reply in the affirmative.

After Archer's resignation, Norman Tebbit and myself were able to get on with the business of winning the next election, without reading the *Evening Standard* each day in terror of finding yet another Archer gaffe uttered in some remote part of the British Isles.

In 1986, help came one morning at breakfast in the Palace Hotel in Bournemouth, where the party conference was being held. At another table was David Montgomery, the Editor of the *Newspaper of the World*, with an elegan-

tragedy in this story and asked me for the truth. She laughed and laughed. "The whole thing is quite Gilbertian," she remarked. When asked does Margaret Thatcher have a sense of humour, I always reply in the affirmative.

When ministers grumbled that Margaret Thatcher was tiresome and difficult, I used to compare her to a great diva, difficult off stage, but pure magic when she came to grips with an aria.

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Your state pension is safe with me

Tony Blair is not persuaded by Peter Lilley's privatisation plan

There is no doubt that the Government's pension proposals are bold. For some commentators that is enough. And in one sense, by opening up the debate, they give whoever forms the next government the chance to conduct the debate more sensibly. But the question is: are the proposals right; and are they thought through?

Most people find the detail of pensions so hard that they give up on it. But the detail here is crucial, and in essence the Conservative scheme is simple. It is to pay now and hope to save later.

Ministers want to create a fund now that will build up over time and so avoid the need for a later generation of pensioners to be paid a state pension. That fund will come in part from taxpayers' money and in part from removing tax relief on contributions to private pensions. Whether that is right or not manifestly depends on whether the balance is fair between what taxpayers are to pay now and what a future generation will gain; and also, of course, on the cost and viability of the government's guarantee if anything goes wrong.

This requires an immense amount of detailed work. It is not clear it has anywhere near been carried out. But let me try to be constructive. There is an ageing population, and unless we plan for that it could create a crisis both for tomorrow's elderly and their children and grandchildren.

We will keep Serps and the basic state pension

Sausage prices twice as high, Where's the vodka for us to buy? All we do is sit at home / Watching Gorbby drone and drone. This Russian ditty, loosely translated, is quoted by Doder and Branson in their book *Gorbachev*. They sum him up: Mikhail Gorbachev presided over "a transitional period between authoritarianism and democracy".

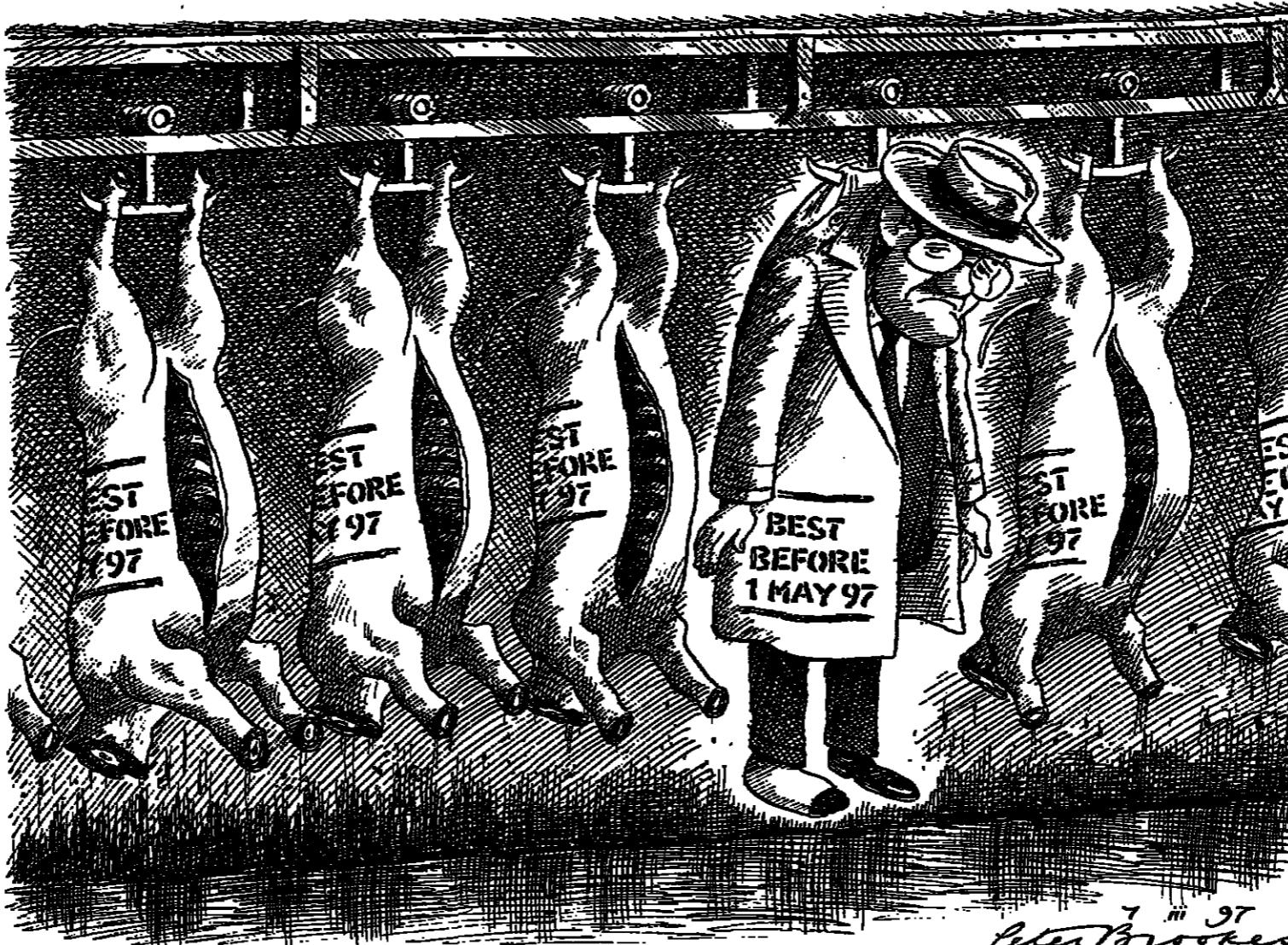
What a bleak phrase! What an epitaph — if that is all he gets — for the man who, more than any, arranged for the Soviet Union a revolution almost as earth-shattering as the one that created it. That achievement has not found its rightful place in the middle of the masterpiece of modern Russian history.

Or not for the Russians, anyway. A prophet without honour in his own country, Gorbachev is described by those of my countrymen I have heard in terms more of irritation than respect. Acknowledgement, where given, is grudging. His is not a name to be conjured with in the popular politics of the age that has succeeded him. The man who ended Soviet totalitarianism, arranged for free elections, a free press, freedom of worship, new legislatures and a multi-party system; the man who introduced a pluralistic economy and opened the Soviet Union to the world outside; the man who almost single-handedly ended the Cold War and the arms race; who invented glasnost and perestroika . . . the man with whom Margaret Thatcher could do business — is consigned by his own and the succeeding generation to the rule of law. With the Star Chamber he sorted out a chaotic administration of justice. "His times," says Bacon, "for good Commonwealth's laws did excel."

They should not be unfairly penalised for changing jobs, being out of work or having children. The scheme should be run in their interests. We will encourage partnerships between the financial service industries, employers' organisations and others to offer these new stakeholder pension schemes. We have consulted widely on our proposals and will continue to do so in government.

The provision of adequate pensions is one of the most critical and difficult challenges confronting all industrialised countries. Policy must be sustainable for the long term: people cannot afford to have their plans thrown into chaos by unpredictable swings in policy.

We should not be afraid to look at any idea, whatever its source, for the right solution. But policies that start from ideology — whether the belief that the State should do everything or that it should do nothing — are unlikely to produce the best outcome.



Heroes of transition

What do Henry VII, Gorbachev and Neil Kinnock have in common?

He made safe for us. They constructed the compass. They made the obvious obvious. To be dismissed as having done no more than the obvious can be a backhanded compliment of the highest order.

Richard Nixon has suffered a similar fate. Assisted by Willy Brandt (another key neglected figure of transformation) Nixon was the father of the East-West détente in which Mikhail Gorbachev flourished. He recognised China. He visited Beijing. He pulled American troops out of the Vietnam War and the quasi-imperialist attitudes that accompanied it. Successor

to Goldwater as presidential candidate, he rescued the Republican Party from itself.

Launched with the rhetoric of a cold warrior, his presidency proved a disappointment to the

Matthew Parris

hardliners whose support he had courted; yet he could never be acceptable to liberal America. The resulting rather unfocused image, of a political fixer without bearings, was probably critical in sinking him when Watergate came, yet comparable scandals have failed to sink Presidents better regarded by their age. Nixon bridged two traditions in American politics, disappointing both.

Edward Heath should sympathise. The first modern Tory Prime Minister, he took British Conservatism to the very doorstep of "Thatcherism". Beginning his career in the whig office, he helped to ease out the party's ageing leader, Churchill. A carpenter's son, he promoted a grocer's daughter, part of a transformation of his party from an old boys' network into a meritocracy. He took Britain, and British Conservatism, into Europe. He took a first brave swipe at trade unionism. Yet (says his biographer, John Campbell) "Heath's career appeared to end in more complete isolation, obloquy and embarrassment than any other in modern times".

As with Adolfo Suárez in Spain, the succeeding age remembers only that he ushered it in, loaded with the baggage of what had gone before, finally stumbled. Suárez ought to be a

20th-century hero. He came up through the ranks of the totalitarian politics of General Franco, but secretly impressed the King. Seen as a reactionary nonentity, his appointment by Juan Carlos as Prime Minister in 1976 was greeted in *El País* as "Que error! ¡Qué imenso error!"

Without democratic legitimacy,

Suárez had to run the Government

which would introduce democracy,

dismantling the very system that had produced him. This he accomplished with skill, nerve, generosity and astonishing decisiveness. His Government legalised the Socialists and the trade unions. He won Spain's first election, a year later. "Rather to our surprise," says John Hooper in *The New Spaniards*, Spain found itself a decentralised nation of homely regions.

But Suárez lacked the skills of

a party leader, and, in the party system he had helped create, faltered.

He was replaced, later ennobled,

and is now less remembered than his

successful Socialist successor, Felipe González. But González, and modern Spain, owe everything to Suárez.

Just over the frontier in Portugal, another European nation owes much to — but hardly remembers — the man who achieved the incredible leap from Third World dictatorship to European democracy: Mario Soares, a hero in my transitionalists' hall of fame.

Neil Kinnock deserves a place there too. We gasp at the achievements of Tony Blair, who came rather late to courage. We salute the memory of John Smith, who proved timid but was redeemed by death.

But at the record of the man who kicked over the Military tables and wrenched his party away from the past, we only snigger. Tony Blair is not the originator of new Labour: he is the product of it. Mr Kinnock was seen by the socialist companions of his youth as selling out on socialism; and among Labour's rootless young newcomers it is not fashionable to acknowledge the bravery of those who were brave when to be brave you did have to be brave. Mr Kinnock's reputation is therefore lost in a limbo between old Labour and new. But it was he who ushered in the new.

Mr Kinnock looks happy in his new job. Suárez is a duke, Heath a curmudgeon. Nixon never recovered, Soares is hardly remembered and Henry VII we have all but forgotten. To Henry, then, and fellow-translators in every institution, large and small, let us raise our glasses to the tired and anxious little men with

small blue eyes and bad teeth.

Machiavelli never found anybody to live up to his ideal Prince. He was consistently let down, first by Cesare Borgia; then by Piero Soderini, the gonfalonier (Prime Minister) of Florence; then by the Magnificent Lorenzo de' Medici. You were not in the least interested in politics. But you are clearly in love with your Principessa, your Mother/Mistress/Goddess substitute, who was the first person to give you a proper job, at the ripe age of 32. Your brown-nosed accounts of her feeding and stroking you are sweet, though in the saccharine *Hello!* mode.

Machiavelli was the proto-Thatcherite: "As a prince must be able to act just like a beast, he should learn from the fox and the lion. Because the lion does not defend himself against traps, and the fox does not defend himself against wolves. So one has to be a fox in order to recognise traps, and a lion to frighten off wolves." You left the politics to your Princess and enjoyed the bizaar at the centre of things. Desperate times call for desperate measures. Machiavelli laid down the extreme Thatcherite insistence that while voters are bound by conventional morals, a ruler may use any means necessary to maintain power, no matter how unscrupulous.

Contemporaries said that you both made things up and got things wrong. But your anecdotes are more entertaining because we know the victims. "The only part about the recession that was short and shallow was its cause: Norman Lamont." And who, apart from the victims, will not relish your Borgia stiletto in the back of former chums? Geoffrey Howe's monstrous ego thinking that John Major's arrival at the Foreign Office was meant to be a great help to him. Ted Heath spitefully misleading his adviser into expecting the Sir he had waited all his life for. John Major hauled in to shake party money out of some shady Greek millionaire. Jeffrey Archer, for the sake of Britain, must never be given a job of any political consequence. Now, you are anxious to offer yourself to Your Magnificence with some token of your devotion to Her. Your little book may not have the ideological force of Old Nick's. But if your Princess has the sense of humour you surprisingly allude to that she has, she will be laughing her head off. With the cruel laughter of Medici

Cat flap

THERE is an eerie howl emanating from the back alleys of Whitehall, as Humphrey the Downing Street cat prepares for life without the trappings of power. Under the Tories, he is cosseted and cared for. Labour's big enchiladas, however, are not cat-lovers. Cherie Blair has been telling friends she finds cats unhygienic.

At the moment, Humphrey has

the run of Downing Street. He



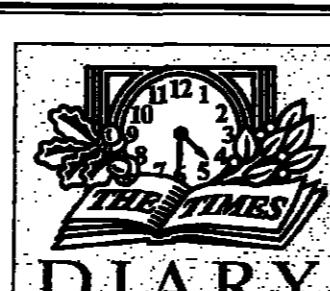
comes in and out of the back door of No 10 at will, then jumps over to No 11 where he is welcomed by Gillian Clarke, the Chancellor's wife, with a bowl of catfood. Mrs Clarke even wears a cat-decorated pinny to make Humphrey feel at home.

Gordon Brown, not a pinapone man so far as we know, would be far too busy with his Hayek and Friedman textbooks to bother about Kit-e-Kat. The Blairs, with three children already, do not need any more hungry mouths.

One option is for Humphrey to go with the Clarks or Majors. Neither family, however, has yet signed the adoption papers.

The only ones glad to see him go are the birds around Downing Street. The Prime Minister himself intervened when Humphrey started looking at them with the sort of drool that Sir Edward Heath reserves for a suet pudding.

No Cartier at this year's Chelsea Flower Show. Despite having bagged a gold medal in three successive years, the company has



Yas man

YASSIR ARAFAT, in New York this week, has let slip a detail about his relationship with the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, of whom he was so bitterly critical after the 1978 Camp David accord. Arafat, in the course of a relaxed Manhattan conversation with Janet Wallach, co-author of an Arafat biography, told her: "I'll tell you a real secret, one I have never told anyone before. I met Sadat in 1950 and was his official

witness when he married, not for the first time, but the second."

Yesterday's *New York Times* reported that Mrs Wallach replied:

"What do you mean by official witness?" Arafat told her: "In this country you call it best man."

Wheels off

ELECTION TIME has heightened the political sensitivities of Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, who is to open Richard

Branson's new West Coast main line on Monday. All was in order for a glittering event until the Sir

George spotted the name of the train he was supposed to be blessing: *Red Renaissance*.

"I think the irony would not have been lost on the voters," says one close to Sir George. A discreet phone call and Branson's lot agreed to find a less contentious title: *Mission Impossible*.

Raw nerve

THERE is no stopping Kristen McMenamy, the leopoldine Carnelian model. After being turned down by Versace for this season's show, because she "wasn't couture enough", Miss McMenamy drove to his hotel and stripped.

Striking a pose, in only high-heels and stringy lingerie, she sashayed into the Versace salon, posed and asked him: "Am I haute couture or what?" Signor Versace booked her.

Putting on

ABANDONING her populist roots, Mel B, Spice Girl, turned up in the Palm Room of the Ritz in Pic-



McMenamy: take that

cadilly on Wednesday. Just as the assorted duchesses and walkers were gathering up their shh-tzus after tea, in came Mel B wearing a loud 1960s trouser-suit of geometrical design, clapping the hand of a diminutive redhead.

Ignoring autograph hunters, she paraded to plonk herself in the laps of various startled Fink-Nortie types. Flirting with one centred man she asked him what he had done that day, then cooed: "Poor, poor you, having to work."

P.H.S



"Stop it, Eric. The Queen can't see you"

Philip Howard



■ Not quite the new Machiavelli

It is a pretty diary, Lord McAlpine. But you must not call it Machiavelli. Your fiction, *The Servant*, was far less plausible than your bitchy, witty memoirs that we are serialising in *The Times*. And they are so much more fun than the maudlin self-pity of Ian Greer, who still cannot recognise that he was a cause of the steaze disease, not its victim. *Your Servant* was a salute to *The Prince* by that other loose cannon of a courtier, Niccolò Machiavelli.

But there is the similarity between you ends. Out of his surname we have coined an epithet for a rascal, and out of his Christian name a synonym for the Devil. *Hudibras*: "Nick Machiavel had never a trick, / Though he gives name to our Old Nick." In fact, this is folk etymology and false. Old Nick was around as a nickname for man's oldest enemy long before Machiavelli schemed in Renaissance Florence and became a bogey to frighten babies of English xenophobes. But your surname has become a synonym for big concrete, and your Christian name is a name for dentists. Machiavel was a poor boy, son of a bankrupt, who was driven to educate himself very learnedly from books. You were born with a silver cement-mixer in your mouth; and your education was of the sort that can only be expected from Stowe.

Machiavelli was a serious player in the turbulent politics of his time, as ambassador, statesman and top sharpie to the way to summits for popes, emperors and kings. He invented military conscription in order to give Florence its own militia, and he is the father of political science. While your political talents lay in persuading rich climbers to take out their wallets and shake them into the clandestine bucket of Conservative Party funds. He was the sarcastic thin-lipped ideologue, driven by his schemes to put the world, and especially Florence, to rights. You are the jovial Charnpaine Charlie, and never a proper Thatcherite. In retrospect you are certainly rude about the real Thatcherites. He was small, thin and bitter. You are small, round and jolly.

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BUGS IN THE SYSTEM

A new E. coli incident: another case for institutional change

After yet another policy error, the Ministry of Agriculture has exhausted any remaining excuses. As far as consumers are concerned, the initials MAFF have come to mean More Awful Food Failings. The thoroughly inept performance of Douglas Hogg should not, however, be taken as the prime source of recent problems. The conduct of his department itself must be addressed. The failure to publicise the Hygiene Action Team's disturbing report into the practices of Britain's abattoirs was incompatible with a proper concern for public health.

None of the key issues was addressed by the Prime Minister or Mr Hogg in their statements yesterday. Neither man could provide a satisfactory response as to why a report that took 12 months to produce, involved site visits to every abattoir in the country and which generated such devastating conclusions, was not read by ministers. That would have been inexcusable in any circumstance. That it was still the case even after the announcement on BSE is astounding. Mr Hogg sought credit for the creation of the Meat Hygiene Service over Labour opposition. If its output was not deemed important enough to place on ministers' desks it is not clear why he bothered.

Despite this inattention, officials could have acted in place of their political masters; then matters would have been mitigated. Instead, a 54-page report, short and snappy by Whitehall standards, was rendered "more concise" and its author asked to recast it in a more positive spirit. It would ultimately merit only a single reference on one page of the Meat Hygiene Service annual report that was placed in the library of the House of Commons. Mr Hogg seemed

to think that represented an adequate level of consultation. Not many others will agree.

Even this sanitised version was not made publicly available. Instead the circulation was limited to certain industry insiders for fear of additional adverse publicity after the BSE announcement. Obviously the affected abattoirs needed to be informed of their defects to improve their future functioning. But the possible consequences of past misconduct demanded a much wider audience. The impression left is that, once again, the protection of its industry was the ministry's chief aim.

If the 81 recommendations outlined by the Hygiene Action Team had actually been implemented, that would have represented some recompense. Mr Hogg, however, could offer no such guarantee nor set out on what basis the various suggestions had or had not been accepted. The public has only the pledge of ministers that satisfactory action has been taken. There is little basis on which to have much faith in that.

No reform or reassurance from the Ministry of Agriculture can now pass muster. It cannot be made sufficiently distant from the producer interests that it is intended to regulate. A separate and independent agency, broadly modelled on the American Food and Drug Administration, reporting directly to the Department of Health and Parliament, is the sole device that might now restore confidence. It alone can attract and then deploy specialist officials of due standing. In the United States the FDA has critics who claim that it enforces its mandate with an excess of vigour. After the events of the past year an overzealous approach here would be very welcome.

LANDSLIDE DANGERS

Labour must beware bold prophecy

The polls point to a Labour victory at the next election. The vast majority of voters expects Labour to win. Even John Major at last alludes to the prospect of power changing hands. But when Labour politicians speak of their fondest hopes they are asking for trouble. Robin Cook let slip his expectations of a Labour "landslide" at a semi-private dinner on Wednesday night and the wrath of his leader descended upon him. "We take nothing for granted," Tony Blair said yesterday.

The Labour leader knows that all complacency is the enemy of victory. But public expectations of a Labour landslide risk disaster for the Opposition and bring good news for the Tories. The prospect of a massive Labour victory scares voters who fear a resulting licence to lurch to the Left. It encourages low turnout of Labour supporters. And it increases the Liberal Democrat vote at the expense of Labour as people seek a counterbalance to an overmighty government. Most of all, though, the British like to reward the underdog. Labour's biggest mistake in the last general election was to hold a rally in Sheffield at which Neil Kinnock behaved as if victory was in the bag.

For this reason, a Labour landslide is unlikely. It would also be psephologically unprecedented. Already Labour needs a swing bigger than the party has achieved since the War merely to govern with a majority. To gain a landslide a majority of more than 100 — would entail a change in the climate of opinion as dramatic as that which swept Attlee into power in 1945.

Would a large majority be as dangerous, however, as many fear? In the past, it would have emboldened a Labour government to be more left-wing. Oddly, the opposite may be the case this time round. Mr Blair's instincts are to the right of his party. His main constraint is, for example, reforming the welfare state would be opposition from his own side. Since the new intake of Labour MPs will be predominantly Blairite, a large

parliamentary majority would allow him to pass such legislation even if some of his older members rebelled.

The changes that have been introduced to the party in the past few years also make a lurch to the Left unlikely. The pressures on Labour MPs are quite different from those in the 1970s and 1980s. Then they had to spend much of their time looking over their shoulders at their activists. The threat of deselection by the intimidating cabals who ran their constituencies forced many to be more left-wing than they would otherwise have wished. Now, deselection is in the hands of every member in a constituency, not just a narrow band of activists and shop stewards. The members themselves are much more moderate; nearly half have joined the party since Mr Blair became leader.

A majority of 50 or so ought to allow Mr Blair to govern comfortably for the full five years, even after deaths and by-election defeats. It would also take the sting out of the West Lothian Question. For Labour would have a majority in England as well as in the United Kingdom. Tory MPs would not be able to complain that Labour was using its Scottish MPs to force through English legislation, while English MPs had no influence on Scottish laws.

A landslide majority, however, does not always lead to good government. Party management becomes more difficult as many backbenchers are left without government or parliamentary jobs. Prime ministers with huge majorities are liable to overinterpret their mandate. Margaret Thatcher did so after 1987, when she pressed too far with her "flagship" policy, the poll tax. Francis Pym warned of the undesirability of landslides before the 1983 election. His declared preference was for a majority of 50 and 100. Many who hope for a moderate but responsive Labour government will agree. Much smaller than 50 and a handful of leftwingers could sabotage Mr Blair's plans. Much larger than 100 and the arrogance of power could go to his head.

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ANIMALS NOT VEGETABLES

All zoos must match the standards of the best

Animal welfare and the environment provoke strong political response among young voters. The transport of livestock, the threat to endangered species and the use of animals for experimentation are of passionate concern to activists who, a generation ago, would have marched and courted arrest in protest against nuclear weapons or Vietnam. Labour's warning yesterday that it would introduce tougher licensing laws for zoos, forcing the closure of those that do not meet the higher standards, is not only a welcome recognition of new thinking about their role and organisation; it is a smart vote-catching pledge to engage the attention of a new generation.

Labour is promulgating a new standard for zoos and wildlife parks that should make the cramped, claustrophobic and malodorous cages of the Victorian age a thing of the past. It does not want simply to give more space to captive creatures, however, or to allow animals to roam more freely in imitations of their habitat. Zoos in future would be required to commit themselves to modern standards on welfare, education, science and conservation. A Captive Animal Welfare Council would be set up, similar to the existing Farm Animal Welfare Council, to draft and enforce high standards.

Such proposals have been welcomed by most larger zoos that are already engaged in redefining their *raisons d'être*. The pro-

posals have the backing of the Federation of Zoological Gardens of Great Britain and Ireland, whose members include some of the biggest and best British zoos: in London, Chester, Bristol and Edinburgh. There are, however, some 300 zoos throughout the country and several still exemplify the commercial formula of exhibiting animals as "attractions", keeping them in poor conditions or next door to funfairs and theme parks. The worst would have to close.

All this makes sound ethical sense. London Zoo, which has been at the forefront of the debate on the conservationist mission of zoos in its own near-bankruptcy and closure, is about to reopen the famous Mappin Terraces, remodelled and redesigned to reflect the new standards demanded by animal welfare. Closed 12 years ago, they will form a single exhibit area that will be mainly devoted to sloth bears, a threatened species.

If the battle is nearly won in Britain, this is far from the case in much of Europe. Moscow Zoo, once a great institution, has become a slum, in urgent need of fresh funds. Around the Mediterranean, where attitudes to animal welfare are cavalier, there are shameful exhibits. A proposed European Union directive has been watered down to a recommendation, because of its political sensitivities: but it should be powerfully enjoined.

Labour plans for the constitution, tax and the unions

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

From Lord Marsh

Sir, In the considerable discussion of the Labour Party's plans for reform of the House of Lords there is an ominous silence on the possible future of the non-party crossbench peers.

With 312 members (more than the Labour and Liberal Democrat peers combined) and the complete absence of party allegiance we constitute the second largest group in the House and enjoy total immunity from the threats and blandishments of the party whips. That this is inconvenient for the party managers is understandable since, lacking both the desire and the party organisation to arrive at collective decisions, we can only listen to the arguments and vote on the merits as we see them. While this would be impractical in the Commons, in a second chamber concerned primarily with scrutiny and revision a minority of genuine independents must be of value.

Would it not be sad, and possibly irresponsible, if this unique element in our parliamentary system was allowed to disappear without public discussion?

I remain, etc.
RICHARD MARSH,
House of Lords.
March 4.

From Councillor Sir Ronald Watson

Sir, Sir Jeremy Beecham, the Labour chairman-designate of the new Local Government Association, states that "If I were Tony Blair and I wanted a shift in the proportion of money coming from local taxation I would move early: let the councils take the flak" (report, February 28). This will come as no surprise to those of us who have seen the Labour Party operate at local level in town halls up and down the country.

Labour Party members in local government are now desperately frustrated people. They solemnly but reluctantly adhere to their party's national line and are undoubtedly biding their time until they believe they will be able to exert real influence. Meanwhile, the Labour Party has been very coy about announcing its plans for anything: in local government terms the only commitment that has been

Vanunu plea

From Mr Leslie Waddington

Sir, The history of modern intellectual Judaism is associated with tolerance and respect for the individual. The State of Israel, in its initial kidnapping and continual imprisonment of Mr Mordechai Vanunu in the barbaric conditions described by Mr Andrew Neil (letter, February 24) and ignored by Mr David Harounoff (letter, February 28), is denying this tradition.

For Mr Harounoff to state that the main political parties in Israel support this situation is a very sad point and makes one wonder, with embarrassment, what has happened to that country.

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE WADDINGTON,
11 Cork Street, WI.
February 28.

From Mr Michael Halpern

Sir, Mr David Harounoff's spirited defence of Israel's treatment of Mr Vanunu claims also that it is supported by both Likud and the Opposition.

That is as may be, but the West expects that only Third World dictatorships exact retribution from prisoners — political or otherwise — by incarceration in solitary confinement for a decade.

Such confinement amounts to a cruel and unusual punishment which breaches international standards of accepted behaviour.

Enough would appear to be enough.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL HALPERN,
Alington House,
Alington Road, Poole, Dorset.
February 28.

Israel's 'candid friends'

From Mr David Weizmann

Sir, I would strongly oppose the contention put forward by President Weizmann during his state visit to this country (report, February 27) that the job of Jews outside Israel is to support Israel, but to keep out of that country's politics.

Jews living outside Israel have as much right to criticise Israel as have Englishmen, Germans, Americans or anyone else to criticise their country, wherever they live, if they feel their policies are wrong.

Criticism must not be mistaken for enmity and Mr Malcolm Rifkind and others are undertaking the role of candid friends, who wish only for Israel and its neighbours to live in a lasting peace.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID WEIZMANN,
Orchard Cottage,
27 Grosvenor Road,
Caversham, Reading, Berkshire
March 2.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Claim by fans for 'football trauma'

From Mr Bartholomew O'Toole

Sir, Whatever agony Leicester City supporters may have suffered following referee Mike Reed's decision to award Chelsea a penalty kick in the dying minutes of extra time in the FA Cup tie on February 26, in issuing proceedings against the FA claiming compensation for "football trauma", (reports, March 4, 6) they are surely throwing good money after bad.

The Court of Appeal, in *Smoldon v Whitworth and Another* (Law Report, December 18, 1996; see also Law Reports, March 26 and April 20, 1996), confirmed that a rugby football referee could not be properly held liable for errors of judgment, oversight or lapses of which any referee might be guilty in a fast-moving and vigorous game calling for split-second judgments and decisions. The threshold of liability, it was said, was a high one which would not easily be crossed, it was accepted that the referee had a duty to take reasonable care to enforce the rules of rugby so as to safeguard players' safety, but there was no suggestion that liability might be extended to the shock and distress experienced by supporters disappointed by an erroneous decision.

If the courts were to allow such claims by spectators it would open the door to a plethora of claims by players (and all others involved in sport) against referees — a concept expressly rejected and described by the Court of Appeal as "deplorable". Similarly, a claim for lost profits for failure to proceed further in the FA Cup competition by a team against which a penalty kick had been erroneously awarded, would be doomed.

Yours faithfully,
B. V. O'TOOLE
(Referee, Amateur Football Alliance, since 1993),
Mitre Court Chambers, Temple, EC4.
March 6.

Sport letters, page 41

Attlees and Tories

From Margaret, Countess Attlee

Sir, May I comment on your report to day that my stepson, the 3rd Earl Attlee, is to join the Conservative Party.

To my knowledge my late husband, the 2nd Earl, never took the Labour whip in the House of Lords. Nor did he "help to found the SDP". When he succeeded to the title in 1967 he took leave of absence from his duties in the House and it was not until 1981, after the Limehouse declaration, that he decided to join what he described to me as "at last a party that I could believe in".

After the demise of the SDP, and within days before his death in July 1991, he had been in contact with the Tory whips in the House of Lords, expressing his desire to cross the floor and join them. At the time the Conservative Government had already been written off by the polls.

I find myself delighted that my stepson, too, has committed himself by pledging his allegiance to the Tories now, in their darkest hour, rather than wait for the outcome of the election.

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET ATTLEE,
42 Wildcroft Manor,
Putney Heath, SW15.
March 6.

Paper values

From Mr Robert Neave

Sir, How can we not agree with Mr John Nye (letter, March 5) when he points out that the value of the Orton and Churchill papers lies merely in their content?

We derive so much pleasure from the poster of Van Gogh's *Sunflowers* which we purchased for, I think, £2.99. This sum did not include an auctioneer's premium, nor do we need insurance to keep it in the kitchen.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT NEAVE,
Myrtle Cottage,
Cucklington, Wincanton, Somerset.
March 5.

One of a kind

From Professor Emeritus Peter Yates

Sir, To prepare for the cloning era, dictionaries and lawyers will have to redefine the terms "person" and "individual".

I was once faced with this dilemma when a tutor brought to me an essay submitted by a student which was identical to one that he had had from a student in the previous year, the topic having been the same. I suggested that he mark it out of 50 and refer the student to his friend for the other half of the marks. I maintained, and the students eventually agreed, that there was only one essay.

To answer Mrs J. Hadfield's query (letter, February 28), the BBC was quite right to refer to the cloned sheep as "unique". There is only one rose called *Peace* though it appears in many gardens. Members of a clone, though separately mobile, remain one individual and, if human, should have only one vote and one person.

Yours faithfully,
PETER YATES,
Beach House, Shore Road,
Silverdale, Carnforth, Lancashire.
February 28.

Channel 5 retuning

From the Chief Executive of Channel 5

Sir, The notion that "two million households face charges of up to £100 to have their television sets retuned" (report, February 24) is fantasy. By the time three months have passed from Channel 5's launch *no body at all* suffering interference to video or other relevant equipment as a result of Channel 5 transmissions should have to spend *anything* on retuning.

It is a statutory duty of Channel 5's to cure such problems within 14 days of notification. In the three months from launch, and in the month of pre-launch test transmissions, virtually everyone likely to suffer interference will have found out about it.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID ELSTEIN, Chief Executive,
Channel 5 Broadcasting Limited,
22 Long Acre, WC2.
February 24.

Business letters, page 29



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 6: His Excellency Monsieur Pierre-Michel Ngumbi was received at audience by Her Majesty. The Queen presented the Letters of Recall of his predecessor and his own Letters of Credence as Ambassador from the Republic of Congo to the Court of St James's.

Monsieur Ngumbi was also received by Her Majesty.

Sir John Colville (President Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs) was present.

The Queen received the Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich (The Right Reverend John Lewis) who did homage upon his appointment.

The Rt Hon Antony Newton MP (Lord President of the Council) administered the Oath.

The Bishop of Derby (Duke of the Closet) was in attendance.

Her Majesty this afternoon visited Kingsbury High School, Peters Avenue, Brent, London NW9, and was received by Mr Brian Caesar-Gordon (Deputy Lieutenant of Brent), the Chairman of Governors (Mr Roger Sims) and the Mayor of Brent (Councillor Ms Ian Patel).

The Queen toured the school, escorted by the Headmaster (Mr Philip Snell), viewed various computer and information technology displays and transmitted an E-Mail message to Nakura Public School, Ontario, Canada.

Her Majesty subsequently launched the new Web Site.

The Duke of Edinburgh, President Emeritus, World Wide Fund for Nature - Wwf International, this morning visited Sri Banu Yai Island in the Persian Gulf.

His Royal Highness later presented a Gold Panda coin to Sheik Zayed bin Sultan al Nahyan, The President of the United Arab Emirates.

The Duke of Edinburgh, Chairman and Founder of the International Trustees, this afternoon attended a Luncheon for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Association before flying from Abu Dhabi to the Sultanate of Oman.

The Baroness Miller of Henton (Baroness in Waiting) called upon the Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda and Lady Carlisle at the White House Hotel, Albany Street, London NW1, this morning and, on behalf of The Queen, welcomed their Excellencies on their arrival in this Country.

Colonel Sir Brian Bartleot, Bt (Vice Lord-Lieutenant of West Sussex) presented at Canwick Aerodrome, this afternoon upon the Departure of The President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Mrs Mugabe and bade farewell to His Excellency and Mrs Mugabe on behalf of Her Majesty.

The Queen was represented by the Baroness Miller of Henton at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of the Late Sultan (former Her Majesty's Ambassador to the United States of America) which was held in St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey today.

The Duke of Edinburgh was represented by Sir Brian McGrath.

The Duke of Kent was represented by Mr Andrew Palmer.

Royal engagements

The Duke of York, as president, will attend the annual dinner of the Royal Household Golf Club at Twickenham Rugby Football Ground, Middlesex, at 7.45.

The Princess Royal will open the Midlands Engineering Centre, Birmingham, for the Institution of Electrical Engineers at 10.30; and will open the new design and engineering centre, the Rover Group Research Centre, Gaydon, Warwickshire at 12.30.

The Duke of Kent, as President of the Royal Institution of Great Britain, will attend a discourse given by Professor Robin Clark at Albermarle Street at 7.15.

Reception

HM Government
Mr Anthony Nelson, Minister for Trade was the host at a reception given by Her Majesty's Government yesterday at Lancaster House to promote Anglo-Japanese co-operation worldwide.

BIRTHS

BALFOUR - On 6th March in Sydney, to Fiona and James, a son, David James, Sophie, brother for Emma.

BUCHER - On February 26th at The Studio, Finsbury Park, to Jayne (née Gold) and Robert, a beautiful son, Robert, a brother for James.

CHAPIN - On January 27th at The Studio, Finsbury Park, to Jayne (née Gold) and Robert, a son, Oliver Harry Robert, a brother for Lucy and Hugo.

DURHUM - On 5th March 1997, in St Stephen's Finsbury, a daughter, Felicity Elizabeth.

ELMISTR - On March 4th 1997, to John (née Sharp) and Jane, a daughter, Sophie.

GILLIES - On March 3rd at The Studio, Finsbury Park, to Michael and Caroline, a son, Alexander Andrew Craig, a brother for Callum and Fraser.

HESKETH - On February 19th 1997, to Helen and David (née Pledger), a son, Jamie Angus.

LEIGH - On February 12th at The Portland Hospital, to Alan and Helen, a daughter, Hannah Esther, a sister for Natalie, Gillian, Joseph and Michael.

MONTGOMERY - On March 1st, to Heslop and Helen, a son, Jamie Angus.

SMITH - On Friday 3rd April to Richard, Carol and Oliver, a daughter, Sophie, a brother for Veruska and Becca.

STEWART - On Sunday March 2nd 1997, to Nicola (née Harrison) and Alastair, a son, Charles Alastair (Charlie).

STILLE - On March 3rd at The Portland Hospital, to Susan (née Stone) and Guy, a son, Freddie, a brother for Holly and Sam.

Princess Alexandra

Princess Alexandra, the Hon Lady Ogilvy was represented by Major Sir Peter Colville (President Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs) was present.

The Queen was represented by Baroness Miller of Henton, the Duke of Edinburgh by Sir Brian McGrath and Queen Elizabeth II by Captain Sir Alastair Aird at a memorial service for Lord Sherfield, FRS, held yesterday at St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey.

The Duke of Kent was represented by Mr Andrew Palmer and Prince Andrew by Major Sir Peter Colville.

Canon Donald Gray, Chaplain to the Speaker, officiated and the Right Revd Lord Runcie led the prayers. The Hon Dwight Makins, son read the lesson and the Hon Roland Phillips, grandson read from the works of John Donne, Lord Carrington, KG, Vicar, gave an address.

The Rev Roger Holloway, Priest Vicar, and the Very Revd John Drury, Dean of Christ Church, were robed and in the sanctuary.

The Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords, Sir David Steel, the Commonwealth, the French Ambassador and the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire attended.

The American Ambassador was represented by Mr Michael Habib, Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs, the US Ambassador to the United Kingdom, and Mrs Anne Gosselin, the French Ambassador, the French Ambassador and the Lord-Lieutenant of Hampshire attended.

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CLARENCE HOUSE
March 6: Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother was represented by Sir Alastair Aird at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of the Lord Sherfield which was held in St Margaret's Church, Westminster, yesterday.

His Royal Highness this evening attended a Reception on Park Avenue in support of the award.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sean O'Dwyer is present.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
March 6: The Prince of Wales this evening visited the Majlis al Shara (Consultative Council).

His Royal Highness afterwards attended a Reception for senior members of the King Faisal Foundation, senior members of Riyad University and Islamic scholars, followed by a Luncheon given by Prince Khalid al Faisal.

The Prince of Wales, President, The Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum, this afternoon attended a luncheon for young Saudi businessmen.

His Royal Highness afterwards attended a presentation, under the auspices of the Jannahri festival, of the work of the Visual Islamic and Traditional Arts Department of The Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture.

The Prince of Wales this evening attended a Dinner given by Prince Salman bin Sulaiman.

KENSINGTON PALACE
March 6: The Duchess of Gloucester this evening attended a Concert in aid of St Christopher's Fellowship Howard House Appeal at St James's Church, St James's Gardens, London W1.

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YORK HOUSE
March 6: The Duke of Kent this morning visited Her Majesty's Ship *Centaur*, seen in operational service in Plymouth, and later visited Her Majesty's Naval Base, Devonport, Devon.

The Duchess of Kent, Patron, this evening unveiled her portrait, followed by dinner, at Downing College, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire.

Christening

The infant son of Mr and Mrs William Salmon was christened at the Royal Household Golf Club at Twickenham Rugby Football Ground, Middlesex, at 7.45.

The Princess Royal will open the Midlands Engineering Centre, Birmingham, for the Institution of Electrical Engineers at 10.30; and will open the new design and engineering centre, the Rover Group Research Centre, Gaydon, Warwickshire at 12.30.

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DEATHS: St Thomas Aquinas, Dominican theologian, Fossanova, Italy, 1274; Cuthbert Collingwood, 1st Baron Collingwood, admiral, at sea, 1863; John Richard Green, historian, Merton, 1892; Stevie Smith, poet, London, 1971.

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Lord Sherfield, FRS

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OBITUARIES

CHEDDI JAGAN

Cheddi Jagan, President of Guyana since 1992, died yesterday at Walter Reed Army Medical Centre, Washington, aged 78. He was born on March 22, 1918.

It is ironic that Cheddi Jagan spent his last days being cared for in a US military hospital, after having been for so long a dogged opponent of US policies and a committed supporter of the Soviet Union. Washington, through its powers in diplomacy and the CIA and its associated arms, did everything possible to ensure that he never came to power during the Cold War period.

Jagan was the figure in the political life of British Guiana who gained most international notice during the last tumultuous decade of that territory's life as a colony.

Handsome, and with immense charm, he had some of the qualities of a demagogue, but one without sure political instincts. He was a Communist who followed the Moscow line, but he lacked the ruthlessness and discipline of the true Marxist revolutionary. He was confused about means, a dismal tactician, and he was outmanoeuvred by his opponents at home and abroad.

Descended from indentured Indian labourers, and one of 11 children, Cheddi Bharrat Jagan was born on a sugar plantation in the Corentyne. He was educated at Queen's College, Georgetown, from where he went on to study dentistry in the United States. There he met and married, in 1943, his wife Janet Rosenberg, later establishing himself in dental practice in Georgetown, with her as his nurse.

The couple formed political discussion groups and published tracts. Jagan was elected to British Guiana's Legislative Council in 1947, representing the East Demarara sugar workers. In 1950 the People's Progressive Party (PPP) was founded, joining the two main racial

groups in the colony in political union, with Jagan as leader, his wife as general secretary, and a black barrister, Linden Forbes Burnham, as chairman. In 1953, in the first election with universal suffrage, they won overwhelmingly.

In office, the party made clear its intended lack of respect for the colonial constitution. Jagan was Minister of Agriculture, Labour and Mines; the PPP, through the union it controlled, called a general strike in the sugar industry. After 133 days the Governor suspended the constitution, considering the Government pro-Communist. Jagan rushed to London to rally support; after he returned, he and his wife were detained for six months.

Always ambitious, Burnham tried to seize control of the PPP in early 1955, but was blocked by the Jaganites; two rival PPPs came into existence, divided by race. The constitution was restored in 1957, and in the election which followed, Jagan's supporters, using the Hindi slogan "Apam Jat" (Vote your Own) won nearly two thirds of the seats. A successful period in office followed, with the emphasis on development and on new schools and roads. Following the election of 1961, under a more advanced constitution, Jagan became "BG's" first Premier, and he planned independence for 1962.

But in that year Georgetown's black population rose up in protest against an austere budget. Jagan was humiliated, having to call in the British troops. Deep communal suspicion and violence now separated what had been harmonious multi-racial society. Many non-Hindu Guyanese, especially professionals, emigrated. Jagan stubbornly tried to impose his will on the black trade unions, who responded with a general strike of 79 days, and they won.

In their struggle, the trade unions, especially the civil servants', were largely sustained by funding later revealed as coming from US intelligence sources, now deeply concerned over Jagan's Soviet



links, as President Kennedy made clear to Harold Macmillan, who promised Britain's co-operation.

At the London Constitutional Conference in 1963, with Guianese parties deadlocked, the Colonial Secretary, Duncan Sandys, prevailed upon them to sign an agreement giving him carte blanche to propose his own solution. Astonishingly, Jagan agreed; it was Burnham who was

hesitant. Sandys opted for proportional representation, allowing a combination of all other races to out-vote the Hindus.

Furious at his own naivety, Jagan at first refused to accept the decision, but he eventually contested the subsequent election. Ethnic violence marked the campaign, and the Governor, Sir Richard Luyt, took emergency powers. Jagan was defeated, and yielded office to a coalition

of Burnham's People's National Congress and a small pro-capitalist party.

Independence came in 1966. Burnham consolidated his power. Jagan's response was confused, as he was outwitted by the ruthless and opportunistic Burnham, who declared Guyana a co-operative and socialist republic and nationalised all major industries, outflanking Jagan, by developing warm relations with Cuba and the Soviet Union.

Jagan's rigidity made co-operation with other opposition elements impossible, and direct challenges such as the strike of the East Indian sugar workers were broken. Some leading PPP figures were even ejected away by ministerial office.

In common with many impartial observers, Jagan denounced the fraudulent character of subsequent Guyanese elections. But he continued to participate in them, as an ex-citizen in party and above all ethnic solidarity.

He spent the 1980s campaigning for free elections. Burnham died in August 1985, being succeeded as President by Desmond Hoye, who inherited an economy laid waste by nearly 20 years of political nepotism and incompetence. Formerly prosperous Guyanese had sunk to the level of Haiti in their per capita earnings, vying for the lowest place in the Americas. The IMF, USAid and the Caribbean Development Bank refused all further aid and credit.

Hoye, essentially a pragmatist very far from Burnham's egoism, was forced to seek help from outside. The price was an undertaking that fair and free elections would eventually come. A rapprochement with the US Administration followed, and the IMF became friendlier. There was massive devaluation, and a privatisation programme was announced.

As part of the growing understanding between Washington and Moscow, the Soviet Union now ceased to sustain its supporters among Caribbean leftists, apart from Cuba: the prospect of Jagan's

coming to power thus became less of a worry to the Americans. As the Soviet empire and then the USSR itself disintegrated, it was possible to view this still committed Marxist with equanimity.

In October 1992, watched by observers from the Commonwealth and the Carter Centre, Jagan was elected President at the age of 74, having stood on a broad ticket combining the PPP with a number of publicly concerned individuals and small organisations.

In his four years in office Jagan allowed the privatisation policy begun by Hoye to continue, though at a slow and deliberate pace. He was suspicious of any forced sale of the family silver, remarking that he had not been elected to preside over the liquidation of Guyana.

The foreign debt position improved: several major creditors, including Britain, helped by writing off large amounts. GDF, from its very low base, began to climb. Goldmining saw a spectacular increase. Rice and sugar production rose.

Constrained by the IMF restructuring programme and Guyana's perilous economic situation, Jagan appeared a moderate in office — though he made clear that his Marxist views remained unreconstructed.

But, though many Guyanese of all shades respected him, they often thought differently of his ministers and officials. There has been little progress in the task of building racial unity.

Under the constitution, he is succeeded now as President by the Prime Minister, Samuel Hinds, the black former chairman of Guyanese Action for Reform and Democracy (Guard). But his death leaves Guyana facing a period of great political uncertainty, until and beyond the general election scheduled for this October. He leaves no designated successor in the PPP.

Jagan is survived by his wife and by a son, who has said he would be available for selection to succeed his father, and a daughter.

WILLIAM TATTON BROWN



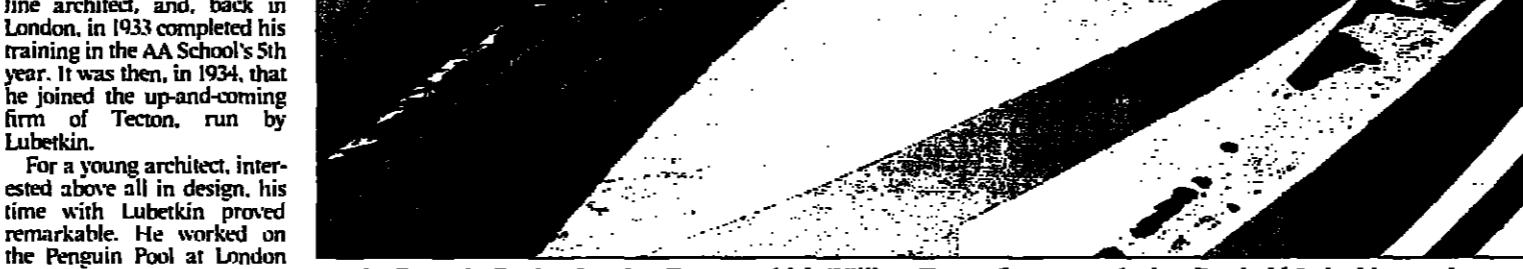
William Tatton Brown, CB, architect, died on February 2 aged 86. He was born on October 13, 1910.

In a wide-ranging architectural career, William Tatton Brown helped to design some of the most outstanding state schools of the immediate post-war period, ran a Ministry of Health department and enjoyed the pleasure of private practice. He worked first with the pioneering Berthold Lubetkin, who helped to introduce modern architecture to Britain in the 1930s, before moving on to work with Hertfordshire County Council in the 1940s and 1950s.

He was in charge of the Ministry of Health's hospital building programme in the 1960s, but also, during much of his career, worked in partnership with his wife, Aileen, on domestic projects.

William Eden Tatton Brown was born in Lewes, spent his early years in Egypt where his father was head of Egyptian Customs, returned to England after the First World War and went to school in Rottingdean. From there he went to Wellington College and, in 1928, was at the Architectural Association School for a year, going on to King's College, Cambridge, to read history and architecture.

In 1932 he went to France, tried without success to work for Le Corbusier, got a job with André Lurçat, another



The Penguin Pool at London Zoo, on which William Tatton Brown worked as Berthold Lubetkin's assistant

fine architect, and, back in London, in 1933 completed his training in the AA School's 5th year. It was then, in 1934, that he joined the up-and-coming firm of Tecton, run by

Lubetkin.

For a young architect, interested above all in design, his time with Lubetkin proved remarkable. He worked on the Penguin Pool, a breakthrough in terms of an architectural conception, fired him with enthusiasm, the Highpoint blocks were of particular importance to Tatton Brown.

He was the chief assistant for these, and what he learnt from their highly sophisticated structures, planning and details persisted as an influ-

ence throughout his life. As a continuation of his training, the experience could not be bettered.

With this background, he became deeply involved with the modern movement and with the Mars (Modern Architectural Research) Group. In 1938 he left Tecton to set up in practice with Lionel Brett. This did not last long. With the outbreak of war, he worked

first on the design of air raid shelters, then joined the Royal Engineers and, before going out to Burma, published a piece on the replanning of part of bombed London in the *Architectural Review* in collaboration with his wife, a former assistant of Lubetkin's, whom he married in 1936.

On demobilisation in 1945, a government grant paid for a town-planning course that

brought him the job of assistant regional planning officer at the Ministry of Town and Country Planning.

The ministry did not come

up to expectations and Tatton Brown left in 1948 to become deputy county architect for Hertfordshire and preside over a group of exceptionally talented and educationally orientated architects — David Medd, Mary Crowley, Anthony Potter, Stirrat Johnson-Marshall and Oliver Cox, who led the way in meeting the requirements of R.A. Butler's 1944 Education Act.

This called for a massive school building programme which was exceedingly difficult to fulfil on account of extreme shortages of materials. It was a problem which forced our prefabrication, the lightweight structures, panels and tubular steel trusses which Tatton Brown's group transformed into an aesthetic of unique quality.

This form of construction, developed from experimental work in prefabrication for military use in the war and never before employed in the educational field, was excellent so long as it was limited to the problem it was designed to

solve. It was only when its use spread more widely — to university buildings and housing — that it came to seem disastrous.

While Tatton Brown was in Hertfordshire, the family moved to a farmhouse with 70 acres near Berkhamsted which they farmed. He and his wife, who had already made extensive conversion to a house they owned in Kensington, made various alterations to their farmhouse and, in 1965, also built a house in Spain. Meanwhile he had, for reasons of economy and efficiency, brought his experience of industrial techniques in school buildings, and his knowledge of systems in America and Scandinavia, to bear on large-scale hospital design.

He was appointed a Companion of the Bath in 1965 and, although retiring in 1971, continued to work as a consultant to the ministry and to lecture at hospital conferences throughout the world. He built a second house in Spain, and wrote (with Paul James) *Hospitals: Design and Development*.

He is survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter.

ROBERT YOUNG

Robert Young, orthopaedic surgeon, died on February 8 aged 93. He was born on October 6, 1903.

ONE of the most distinguished orthopaedic surgeons of the postwar era, Bob Young made his greatest contribution in the development of the surgical treatment of lumbar disc lesions, and also conditions of the knee joint before the days of arthroscopy.

Robert Henry Young was educated at Sherborne, Emmanuel College, Cambridge and St Thomas' Hospital, qualifying MRCS LRCP in 1929. He obtained the degree of BCh (Cantab) in 1934 and FRCS (Eng) in 1936.

He worked as orthopaedic house surgeon and registrar at St Thomas', and as chief assistant to the orthopaedic department under Rowley Bristow. He was in charge of the physiotherapy department, where his association with James Cyriax developed his interest in conditions of the lumbar spine.

With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, he was appointed orthopaedic surgeon to Bodley's Park War Hospital at Chertsey, Surrey, which became a sector hospital of St Thomas', as part of the Emergency Medical Service.

There he worked with B.H. Burns, who was orthopaedic surgeon at St George's Hospital, Hyde Park Corner. Together they pioneered the surgical treatment of lumbar disc lesions. They established a safe and reliable technique of laminectomy — surgical incision into the backbone — for removal of the protruded or damaged lumbar disc. In the days before scans or adequate radiological investigation, they stressed the importance of exploration of more than one level in the lumbar spine.

The hospital at Chertsey was one of the first receiving hospitals for casualties after Dunkirk and D-Day, and offered great opportunities for the development of internal fixation of fractures for the purpose of early mobilisation.

After the war, Young was appointed orthopaedic surgeon to St George's Hospital, where he worked from 1946 to

1968, at the same time continuing at Chertsey where St Peter's Hospital was redeveloped on the old site at Botley's Park. He also started the department at the new St George's Hospital at Tooting in 1966.

Young was an outstanding surgeon and a good teacher both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. He was particularly patient and painstaking in the instruction of his juniors in the operating theatres.

He had a great interest in scientific matters both inside and outside medicine, and developed considerable expertise in the "mathematics of chance". He was very fond of



music, loved the ballet and was himself a talented pianist. He also enjoyed flying.

Shortly after his retirement from the NHS he moved to Malta, where he continued work with the Armed Forces stationed there until the bases were closed down, when he returned to London and resumed private practice until the early 1980s.

He finally retired to his farm in Somerset where, with typical energy, he set out to grow asparagus, develop a small lake for fishing, and start the distribution of beer from the family brewery in Wansorth to the hosteries round Yeovil and the Navy mess at Yeovilton.

In 1929 he married Nancy Wilcox. The marriage was dissolved. He married his second wife, Norma Williams, in 1961. He is survived by her and by their two sons.

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FRIDAY MARCH 7 1997

Treasury attacked over power shares sale decision

By ROBERT MILLER

TREASURY officials were criticised by a Commons committee yesterday for failing to alert ministers to price-sensitive information in the run-up to the sale of a second tranche of shares in the electricity generating companies.

The sale of National Power and PowerGen shares last year attracted more than one million private

investors and raised almost £4 billion for the Treasury's coffers.

A report by the Committee of Public Accounts (CPA), headed by Robert Sheldon, said it shared "the Treasury's regret that ministers were not consulted before the final decision was taken by Treasury officials to proceed with the sale".

Officials exposed ministers to criticism after they failed to inform them of an impending price review

by Stephen Littlechild, the electricity industry watchdog. On March 7 last year, the day after stock market trading began in the partly-paid shares of the two generators, Professor Littlechild duly announced that he intended to look again at the distribution price caps on the regional electricity companies.

After the electricity watchdog's announcement the share prices of National Power and PowerGen fell

sharply to well below the flotation prices fixed the previous week. Ministers immediately faced charges of misleading investors. The MPs noted in their 22-page report "the view of the Treasury and their financial advisers that an announcement would not have had a significant impact on the generating companies' share prices".

At the time of the sell-off, however, Jack Cunningham, the Shad-

ow Trade and Industry spokesman, called on the Serious Fraud Office to launch an official investigation into the sell-off. He alleged that the Government had been in possession of price-sensitive information that would have had an adverse effect on the eventual outcome of the sale.

George Staples, director of the SFO, then sought advice from a senior Queen's Counsel as to whether there was enough evidence to

suspect "the commission of an offence involving serious or complex fraud in connection with the shares' sale". The SFO decided not to launch an investigation.

In yesterday's report the MPs endorsed "the agreement between the Treasury and regulators that, in future, the regulators will avoid making any announcements during a share sale and for a suitable period thereafter".

Penalties to enforce 48-hour working

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

THE Government, having lost a bitter battle against the European Union's 48-hour working week directive, plans severe sanctions, including financial penalties, against companies who breach the new law.

Engineering companies that are likely to be most affected claim that the proposed sanctions go well beyond those specified by Brussels.

Industry leaders said that, having opposed the EU's 48-hour working time directive, the Government is now proposing penalties for failure to comply, which is not required under the directive.

Last year the Government failed to get the European Court to block the EU's directive, which sets maximum weekly hours as well as laying down specific legal requirements on holidays, shift and other patterns of work. Ministers and business insist the directive will push up costs, lead to job losses and reduce competitiveness. But following the court's decision, the Government is now consulting on how to implement it.

In little-noticed proposals, the Government is suggesting that companies that dismiss or take action against employees who assert rights under the directive to work for not more than 48 hours per week may be liable to pay compensation, either in general terms in relation to the nature of the company's offence, or to any directly attributable loss suffered by the employee.

Engineering companies told the Department of Trade and Industry yesterday that "the



Positive comments from Sir Richard Sykes on long-term prospects helped the shares

Cheer on rates lifts markets

By JANET BUSH

SHARES jumped to a record high in London for the third successive day. Investors were cheered by a solid performance on Wall Street and a feeling that UK interest rates will be left on hold for now. The FTSE 100 index closed 39.2 points higher, at 4,393.

The mood in stock markets across Europe was buoyant after Wednesday's suggestion from Alan Greenspan, Chairman of the US Federal Reserve, that he would not push for a rise in US interest rates to defend share values.

In London, Wednesday's monetary meeting brought cheer, with base rates unchanged. Yesterday's statement from the Confederation of British Industry that rates could be left on hold for the first half of 1997. The CBI's latest distributive trades survey yesterday showed a slowing in retail sales growth in February. Sterling ended at 98.4 on its effective index.

Chancellor's cheer, page 26
Markets, page 28

British Gas hit by defections

By GRAHAM SEARJEANT

ONE in eight gas customers in Kent and Sussex has contracted to switch supplier before competition officially starts today, the biggest dent yet in the former British Gas monopoly.

TransCo, the BG company that runs gas pipelines, said that 112,375 out of about 900,000 customers in the latest pilot area for competition have asked to desert Centrica.

The vast majority of defectors have been signed by suppliers linked to the local water and electricity monopolies. ScottishPower, which owns Southern Water, claims more than 50,000 converts, 5.6 per cent of the market. Beacon Gas, a joint venture between Seabord and Amoco, claims 40,000 or 4.4 per cent.

A further 11 competitors have only 2.2 per cent between them so far. This again suggests that Centrica will be faced with a series of local challenges rather than national competitors.

Competition is accelerating in Dorset and Avon, where the market was opened a month

ago. During the past two weeks, the number of customers switching has doubled to 31,000, or 2.2 per cent of the market. In the South West, where competition has been running almost a year, Centrica has lost about 19 per cent of its 500,000 customer base.

Ofgas, the industry's regulator, is to consult competitors and others over an offer by Centrica to direct debit customers in the South West of an extra 6 per cent discount. This is double the direct debit discount available on its national tariff, but still leaves British Gas as a relatively expensive competitor. Rivals say British Gas should not be allowed to cut prices.

Centrica may only offer differential prices if competition has been established in an area.

Clare Spottiswoode, Director-General of Gas Supply, said: "This is a clear signal that competition and choice is what people want." The Gas Consumers Council said it was pleased that almost 250,000 customers had now deserted British Gas.

Joining single currency good for homeowners'

HOMEOWNERS would benefit greatly from low and stable interest rates if Britain joined a single European currency, the Council of Mortgage Lenders said yesterday (Gavin Lumsden writes).

Publishing a report on a single currency's impact on the UK mortgage market, the CML said that monetary union could hurt borrowers if it caused rates to rise, but added that the opposite outcome was more likely.

However, the report's authors, Duncan MacLennan and Mark Stephens, of the University of Glasgow, said that monetary union would

force north European countries, including the UK, to reform social housing and increase private renting, in order to increase the mobility of their workforces.

Consistently low interest rates would also make it cheaper for lenders to supply fixed-rate mortgages, the report said. According to CML figures, four in five new borrowers choose variable-rate mortgages. However, Mr Stephens said that borrowers were unlikely to see the attraction of fixing rates in a low-rate environment.

Pennington, page 27

Markets, page 28

John Lewis staff to share £82m bonus

By CLARE STEWART

STAFF of the John Lewis Partnership are to share a bonus of £82 million after the Waitrose supermarket and department store group rang up record profits in 1996.

Its 36,000 employees, known as partners, will each receive a 20 per cent bonus payment equivalent to about 10 weeks' pay. About 83 per cent of each bonus will be tax-free. The bonus

payments were fuelled by a 45 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £217 million in the year to January 25, with sales rising 12 per cent to £2.2 billion.

Stuart Hampson, chairman, said: "We are extremely pleased and it is a tremendous result. It owes much to the fact that both divisions are progressing well at the same time."

He acknowledged the assistance of "a better following breeze from economic conditions", but added that the

record results did not equate to a consumer boom, with customers continuing to spend cautiously "and with an eye for value".

The 23 department stores increased sales 13 per cent to £1.57 billion. Sales at Waitrose rose 11 per cent to £1.53 billion in a competitive market and flat prices. In spite of being "hit by ricochets from the crossfire," between the market's most aggressive players, Waitrose had no plans to change tack, said Mr

Hampson. "We will concentrate on what we do best — fine food and service." He added that there were no plans to follow other supermarkets in offering banking services.

Sales in the first five weeks of the current financial year rose 6.8 per cent overall, with department stores leading the way with a rise of 9.2 per cent. With virtually no inflation in food prices currently, Waitrose sales showed slower growth, rising 5.2 per cent.

BUSINESS
TODAY

STOCK MARKET
INDICES

FTSE 100 4399.3 (+39.2)
Yield 3.65%
FTSE All share 2145.25 (+15.93)
Nikkei 18041.33 (-322.18)
New York 6980.87 (+35.02)*
S&P Composite 802.85 (+0.68)*

US RATE

Federal Funds 5.75%* (5.75%)
Long Bond 97.75% (97.75%)
Yield 6.05%* (6.05%)

LONDON MONEY

3-month interbank 6.75% (6.75%)
Libor long gilt future (Mar) 111% (111%)

STERLING

New York 1.6132* (1.6138)
London: 1.6121 (1.6098)
S 1.6121 (1.6098)
DM 2.7704 (2.7548)
FF 5.7570* (5.7555)
SEK 2.4002 (2.3952)
Yen 136.00 (125.42)
E Index 98.4 (98.1)

\$100 ST. DOLLAR

London: 1.7163* (1.7130)
DM 5.7570* (5.7500)
FF 5.7570* (5.7500)
SEK 121.20* (121.25)
Yen 121.20* (121.25)
\$ Index 104.2 (104.1)

To close Yen 121.60

EUROPEAN STOCKS

Brent 15-day (May) \$19.20 (\$19.10)

London close \$332.25 (\$322.00)

* denotes midday trading price

Glaxo growth will stall as Zantac fades

By ERIC REGULY

GLAXO WELLCOME issued a warning yesterday that earnings growth will stall over the next two years as sales of Zantac, its best-selling ulcer treatment, plummet in the face of generic competition.

Zantac, once the world's best-selling drugs, loses US patent protection in July and Sir Richard Sykes, chief executive, predicted that its sales could fall by as much as 80 per cent. Zantac's US sales last year declined 14 per cent to £1 billion, equivalent to 54 per cent of global Zantac sales and 23 per cent of Glaxo's overall revenue.

But Sir Richard predicted that Glaxo will return to double-digit growth by 1999, when new product sales gain momentum. "This year and next will not be spectacular in terms of growth," he said. "Beyond that, we are looking for significant growth in sales."

His positive comments on the company's longer-term outlook helped to lift the shares by 6p, to £10.49, in a rising market.

Shares in Glaxo had been on the wane in recent days on the back of fears that the strength of sterling and the dollar against European currencies will put pressure on earnings. It appears that many investors switched their holdings to SmithKline Bee-

cham, whose shares closed up 23p, at 942½, just short of their high for the year.

Glaxo is counting on its new products. Last year, products launched in the past five years rose 50 per cent to £2 billion, equivalent to 24 per cent group sales.

Respiratory drugs, notably Seretide and Flutotide, were among the star performers in the new drugs category. Sales of the respiratory portfolio rose 11 per cent, to £1.76 billion, last year. Viral drugs such as Retrovir and Epivir, the anti-HIV treatments, were also strong.

Last year also marked the first full year of contributions from Wellcome, acquired for £9 billion in 1995.

The company reported 1996 pre-tax record profits of £2.6 billion, up 18 per cent, on sales of £8.34 billion, up 6 per cent. Sales excluding Zantac were up 14 per cent. Earnings per share were 56.7p, against 50.3p.

Debt fell £1.2 billion to £3.2 billion, putting the company in better position to fund another large acquisition. But Sir Richard said that Glaxo was more likely to grow organically. A final dividend of 19p, to be paid on May 20, lifts the total dividend 13 per cent to 34p.

Tempus, page 28

Suffering

Newly merged Royal & SunAlliance suffered from integration costs, exchange rate movements and provisions against environmental claims. Pre-tax profits fell to £648 million from £1 billion in the previous year.

Page 27

Recovery

Arija Wiggins Appleton shares rose after the paper maker surprised the City with the strength of its recovery. Pre-tax profits rose 97 per cent to £134 million.

Page 30

The Perfect Travelling Companion ...

THE DALVEY VOYAGER CLOCK

Time for one last cocktail as the Imperial Airways flying boat waits at the jetty for the flight to Mombasa ...

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LIGHTWEIGHT AND ROBUST

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Housing market defies rules of economics BTR share price may be on the turn Unnecessary deluge of trading news

THIS is a very funny housing market, and one that seems to defy all the normal rules of economics. But what it is not is a booming housing market.

Price rises are relatively modest. Earlier this week the Halifax actually scaled back its annualised figure for house price inflation for the second month in a row, down to 6.8 per cent for the year to February compared with 8.4 per cent in 1996.

The number of housing transactions is running below any year in the 1980s. Last year there were 124 million; the Council of Mortgage Lenders expects 1.35 million this year and a further 100,000 more in 1997. In 1988 2.15 million people moved home.

Yesterday Black Horse Agencies, owned by Lloyds TSB, put out a report that was half a rallying cry to new customers and half a profits warning. There is a desperate shortage of homes for sale. Nationally, there are nine houses pressed up against estate agents' windows for every house. Negative equity is disappearing, especially in the South East. Never been a better time to buy... oh, you can guess the rest.

In economics, supply follows demand. In commodity markets, a shortage prompts producers to build more plant. As they act in an unco-ordinated way, there is soon a glut of plastics or what-

ever, and producers start to close their older, less profitable plant. This causes a shortage again. Houses should be the same, builders stimulated into action by rising prices.

There are two special factors. One is planning law, preventing houses being built where most people want to live, the leafy suburbs or the green belt. The second is rising demographic demand, the much-quoted government figure of 4.4 million more homes needed over the next two decades.

Given these, the normal economic model would have house prices spiralling until enough potential customers are priced out of the market. But this is not happening: the advent of the spring selling season has seen startling price rises in some areas, especially those affected by City bonuses and demand from overseas, but these are not necessarily going to continue.

What is holding prices back is shortage of lending finance. Banks and building societies have learnt their lesson: no 100 per cent loans this time, no silly multiples on salaries. People

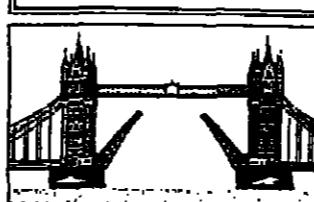
cannot chase prices higher forever. But they are unwilling to downgrade their expectations, so many are losing out. Buying a home is not becoming much more expensive, but it is getting more difficult.

Eventually, prices will have to rise. Given low wage price inflation, the only way this can happen is for lenders to accept that low inflation and interest rates mean they can risk making higher advances to their customers: the logical extension of the CML's musings on the euro yesterday. But the line between this and a runaway housing market is a fine one.

Strachan delivers the goods

IAN STRACHAN at BTR must be wondering what he has to do to pull the shares out of the miserable trough they have occupied since June. Mind you, if he has doubts, his positive demeanour yesterday was giving no hint of it. But even the merest whisper of a share buyback does sound like desperation.

PENNINGTON



Even after yesterday's rise, BTR shares are just 30p above their low for the past year. Catching BTR on the turn has been a perilous task, but there are at last signs that the bottom may have been reached. Unpopularity has been as much to do with its status as an unfashionable conglomerate as with any innate faults, but that status has simply given the market no reason to invest.

Instead, Mr Strachan has ploughed ahead on delivering the promises on restructuring he made a year ago. The disposal programme is 75 per cent over, and the group is well on target for 15 per cent of sales in emerging markets by the year 2000. But most interesting for

now, and particularly poignant on the day that BTR announced the departure of Alan Jackson, one of the architects of its former policy of growth by pumping out new equity, is Mr Strachan's views on future capital needs.

BTR was one of the market's heaviest warrants addicts. This form of share issue, promising shareholders new equity in future at a price higher than the current one, relies on a share price that can be expected to rise without interruption, which is why it has fallen out of favour in these topsy turvy markets. Mr Strachan has not only said that there will be no more such issues, he is putting in place the ability to buy the outstanding two tranches, pretty well worthless at 19½ p and 4½ p, or some of the ordinary share capital.

So BTR will operate within its existing finances, funding acquisitions out of normal cash flow and the proceeds of disposals. Interest cover was a respectable seven times last year so the company should not be stretched, but it all smacks of caution, which the market likes from the new BTR. Mr Strachan

now needs to deliver the sustainable profit growth he has promised. This could be the year the shares come back in favour.

Make it a day to remember

PUBLIC companies with combined market capitalisations of more than £70 billion chose yesterday to present their latest financial statements — and that is disregarding John Lewis, a business of more than passing interest to retail analysts. This is equal to 7 per cent of the total value of the London stock market. There were ten companies alone with market values of more than £1 billion.

Next Thursday will be the same. They seem to like Thursdays — the best explanation is that it allows time for all the executives to jet in from around the world without spoiling their weekends and then to hold a formal board meeting. Wednesday is almost as good a bet. Friday is almost universally shunned, and Monday is unpopular. The result is that on

certain days every spring and autumn, and there are only about a dozen during each reporting season, the stock market is deluged with trading statements. There are attempts to ensure the main players in a given sector do not report on the same day to prevent analysis becoming overloaded, but this does not always work — yesterday saw figures from BTR and Cookson Group. This year has been made worse than most by the early arrival of Easter.

Banks and oil companies manage to report within two months of the end of the trading period. Manufacturers take longer, for some reason, and they insist on monopolising one or two days a week. They then whinge pitifully about how nobody pays them enough attention. The solution is in their hands.

A spin-doctor writes

PICTURE the scene at last week's Cabinet meeting. "Pensions," says someone. "Re-arrange the pension system. At least it shows we're doing something different. Yours, I think, Peter." "But the last time the pension companies went on the rampage there was no end of trouble. City regulation's yours, Ken." "True. Tell you what. We'll hand out a kicking at the same time. I'll get Angie on to it pronto."

Ladbroke keeps an eye on casino bid battle

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

LADBROKE, the hotel and gaming company, admitted yesterday that it was watching the £180 million bid battle between London Clubs International and Capital Corporation "closely".

Ladbroke, which has been linked with a potential takeover offer for the two London casino operators, made it clear that it already had access to bank funds if it decided to launch a bid.

A return to form in the betting division helped Ladbroke to lift full-year profits to £163 million before tax and exceptional items.

Profits in the betting and gaming division rose 46 per cent to £85 million. Ladbroke said that new products, such as Lucky Choice and Forty Nines, had helped the retail betting operations to fight back against the National Lottery.

Vernors, the pools business, also improved profits although turnover

Merger costs take their toll of Royal & SunAlliance

By MARIANNE CURPHEY
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

INTEGRATION costs, exchange rate movements and provisions against environmental claims have taken their toll on profits at the newly merged Royal & SunAlliance. Even the promise of a share buy-back was not enough to stop the shares slipping yesterday, after the company reported a fall in pre-tax profit to £648 million from £1 billion in the previous year.

The first annual results of the combined composite insurer showed that last year's £6 billion merger of Royal Insurance and SunAlliance has so far cost £201 million. £26 million more than the £175 million management predicted could be saved annually. A total of 5,000 jobs are expected to go.

The insurer plans to return up to 5 per cent of its capital to shareholders and will seek permission to do so at May's AGM. However, analysts expressed disappointment at a lower than expected total dividend and the high restructuring costs.

Shares fell 17p to 486p, after an initial jump to 515p on news of the buy-back. Operating profit fell from £915 million in 1995 to £708 million last year. This figure includes £117 million worth of provision against future asbestos and environmental claims in the United States, and £50 million to strengthen claims reserves in the UK. It also includes the effect of exchange rate movements, which cost £32 million over the year. It does not include integration costs of £201 million or a claims equalisation provision of £90 million.

Roger Taylor, RSA deputy chairman, announced Pat-



Roger Taylor, left, with Richard Gamble, group chief executive of Royal & SunAlliance, yesterday

RSA is among a number of insurance companies currently reassessing their possible future liability in the US for business written in the 1960s and 1970s. Eagle Star, the BAT Industries subsidiary, has set aside a £160 million provision.

Roger Taylor, RSA deputy chairman, announced Pat-

rick Gillam, chairman of Standard Chartered, is to become non-executive chairman. He said the share buyback left the way open for more acquisitions, but declined to comment on whether RSA was seeking a UK life insurer.

Profits for the general insurance business after the

changes in claims reserving were £480 million, down from £754 million. Improvements in Canada and Scandinavia were offset by reduced profits elsewhere.

Mr Taylor described weather losses in the US as "exceptional" at £96 million. £36 million higher than in

1995. Life profits increased 15 per cent to £215 million.

The total dividend was raised to 19p per share, in line with management's forecast.

RSA believes personal motor insurance rates will rise this year and said it achieved increases of 8 per cent across the board in 1996.

German rates unchanged as rise in jobless slows

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

THE Bundesbank left German interest rates unchanged yesterday, a decision which coincided with news that unemployment increased again in February.

The discount rate remains at 2.5 per cent and the Lombard emergency financing rate at 4.5 per cent. The key repurchase rate remains at 3 per cent.

The German central bank was widely expected to keep rates on hold in spite of the country's evident problems of unemployment.

The news on jobs was better than many had anticipated after January's shocking rise in seasonally adjusted unemployment of 145,000.

In February, the total rose by only 5,000, to 4.32 million, leaving the unemployment rate unchanged from the 11.3 per cent registered in January.

January's figure sparked deep concern that Germany would fail to meet the Maastricht Treaty deficit criterion and Theo Waigel, Germany's Finance Minister, gave a warning on Wednesday that the country must achieve a turnaround in its labour market performance if it is to meet the treaty requirements for joining a single currency.

Germany's VDMA association said yesterday that the

Hambro back in the black

By GEORGE SIVELL

HAMBRO, one of Britain's largest estate agents, has returned to the black on the back of last year's surge in house prices. And the company reported that sales in January and February are up 25 per cent on the corresponding period last year.

The company also announced the acquisition of an estate agent in central London, an area that Hambro has deliberately avoided in the past. Hambro Worldwide has paid £7.45 million for Faron Sutaria to give it a platform on which to build in the London property market.

In the year to December 31, Faron Sutaria made a profit before proprietors' interests of £1.5 million and has made a "very encouraging" start to this year. Net assets are £983,000.

Pre-tax profits reached £30.8 million in 1996, a striking recovery from the £3.9 million loss clocked up in 1995. Earnings per share recovered to 4.42p from a loss of 2.16p in 1995. The dividend has been restored to 2p a share for the year.

Hambro Worldwide sold 83,844 houses in the year, a rise of 28 per cent on 1995. The company said that the housing market is improving across the country, although there are still regional differences. London and the South East are outperforming other areas.

Hillsdown meets expectations

By CLARE STEWART



HILLSDOWN HOLDINGS, the food manufacturer whose brands range from Typhoo to Buxted chickens, reported results at the top end of City expectations, with pre-tax profits of £12.8 million for the year to December 31.

This compares to the previous year's result when a heavy write-off after the sale of its stake in Maple Leaf Foods of Canada produced a £12 million loss.

Hillsdown also said it is hopeful of soon recovering £1.4 million of tax paid in 1989

on money received from the pension fund of a subsidiary.

Hillsdown, which was subsequently forced by the Pensions Ombudsman to repay the pension fund, is planning to

serve its outstanding writ against the Inland Revenue to recover the tax paid and interest accrued.

George Greener, who took over as Hillsdown chief execu-

tive during the year, struck a confident tone commenting on the results, noting the better business climate and improvement in consumer confidence.

Excluding the benefits of

acquisitions, group sales grew 7 per cent overall with operating profits ahead 11.5 per cent.

The poultry businesses flourished, helped by increased

demand from consumers wor-

ried about BSE and red meat.

Operating profits rose 18 per

cent to £46.8 million.

There is a final dividend of

7.8p making a total of 10p for

the year, up 5.3 per cent.

Analysts are looking for pre-

tax profits of around £165

million for the current year.

Shares in the group were

unchanged at 10p.

Cookson slide hits executive bonuses

By CARL MORTISHED

DIRECTORS of Cookson will not receive bonuses after a year in which the materials group suffered a sharp decline in profits and margins. The worldwide slowdown in circuit board manufacture, combined with a slump in demand for ceramic products in Europe, were to blame for an 8 per cent fall in pre-tax profits to £166 million.

Richard Oster, chief executive, said demand for Cookson's laminates from circuit board makers had picked up in the fourth quarter. "We expect continued improvement with guarded optimism," he said.

Return on sales fell from 11.1

per cent to 10 per cent, mainly due to an 18 per cent fall in profits from electronic materials. Advanced refractories, which makes materials for the steel industry, achieved 5 per cent organic growth despite worldwide steel production being in decline. However, Cookson Matthey Ceramics, the joint venture with Johnson Matthey, suffered from the decline in European construction markets and profits fell 18 per cent. The total dividend is up 8 per cent at 8.6p a share, with a final 4.7p, payable from pre-exceptional earnings of 17p (18.9p).

Tempus, page 28

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STOCK MARKET



MICHAEL CLARK

Wall Street leads London to another record close

FUELLED by Wall Street's 93-point leap overnight, share prices in London were again scaling new heights.

The FTSE 100 index ended just below its best of the day with a rise of 39.2 points at a new closing high of 4,399.3. A modest 885 million shares had changed hands, suggesting that the market is being prodded higher by a stock programme among blue chips.

Investors remain buyers of equities and it seems that demand will continue to outstrip supply for the time being anyway. Wall Street's latest surge came on the back of comments earlier this week from Alan Greenspan, the Federal Reserve chairman, who reassured investors by saying that the equity market was fairly valued.

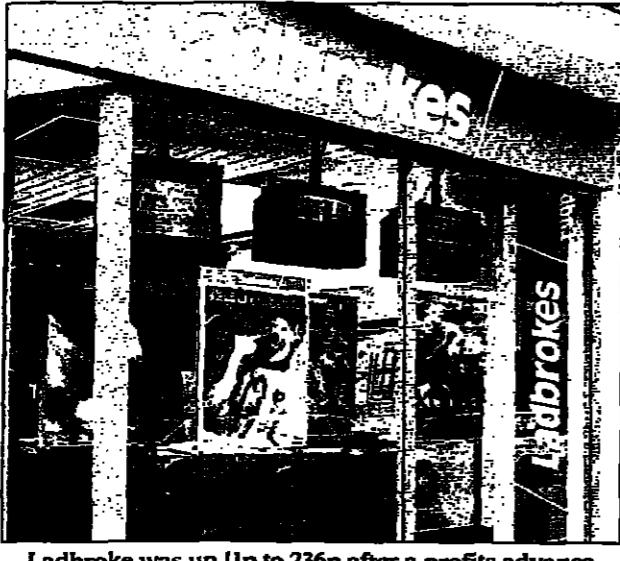
Traders were kept busy by a steady stream of trading statements from leading companies. Full-year figures from Glaxo Wellcome received a lukewarm reception, with the price recovering from an early fall to finish just 10p dearer at £10.49. Pre-tax profits were 18 per cent higher at £2.96 billion, but the group said that a sharp slide in sales of its best-selling drugs, Zantac and Zovirax, after coming off patent in the US was likely to provide a vacuum in sales growth. Sales of new drugs rose 50 per cent to £2 billion.

Institutional investors uncertain about the medium-term outlook for the company were being urged by brokers to switch into SmithKline Beecham, up 10p at 942.5 pence, reporting next week. Finished 6p better at £18.70.

Ladbroke, up 11p at 236p, pleased the market, with profits 18 per cent higher at £163 million before exceptional. It was helped by a strong performance from racing and casinos. Brokers are forecasting pre-tax profits of up to £225 million for the current year.

The group is not ruling out the possibility of making acquisitions and speculators say it may decide to top the London Clubs International £180 million offer for Capital Corporation, 2p easier at 202p. London Clubs finished 11p better at 388.2p.

Dealers were impressed with full-year figures from Rolls-Royce, up 10p at 255p, in spite of diving into the red after write-offs of £248 million. Demand for the Trent engine is swelling the order book, which now stands at £7 billion. BTR



Ladbroke was up 11p to 236p after a profits advance

rose 5p to 259p after an expected drop in profits. The group said the strength of the pound could dent profits by as much as £50 million. GKN responded to a 13 per cent rise in full-year profits with a rise of 18.2p at 97.4p. The shares are likely to fall sharply when US courts rule on the Meineke franchise case.

Newly merged Royal &

at 823.4p as almost a million shares were traded. It follows suggestions that Associated British Foods wants to spend some of its cash mountain on an acquisition. Earlier this week, AB Foods was being linked with Hillsdown, unchanged at 191p after figures, but this seems unlikely. AB Foods closed 7p up at 488p. Unilever rose 20p to

rose 5p to 10.76p amid whispers that the group is looking to make its first acquisition in more than a decade. Speculators say top of its hit list is Cairn Energy, 28p dearer at 574.2p, on turnover of 6.6 million shares. Both companies have exploration interests in Pakistan. Cairn is capitalised at £901 million.

SunAlliance finished 9.5p down at 404p after disappointing profits news that overshadowed news of a share buyback, while a strong second-half performance lifted Cookson Group 6.5p to 235p.

A better than expected performance from Arjuna Wiggins Appleton was good for 15.5p on the shares at 185.4p. Speculative buying drove Reckitt & Colman 11p higher.

SMITHKLINE BEECHAM: SWITCHING OUT OF GLAXO

Source: Datamonitor

Share price

FTSE all-share Index (rebased)

Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar

550p 500p 450p 400p 350p 300p 250p 200p 150p 100p 50p

High: 97.4p Low: 823.4p Close: 974.2p Volume: 34m

RUBBER (NIS) OIL

Mar 164.30-171.50 Jul 168.50-170.00 Vol: 20200

May 167.25-177.50 Vol: 20200

Open interest: 280

LIFE FUTURES (GNI) Ldn

Mar 164.30-171.50 Jul 168.50-170.00 Vol: 20200

Open interest: 280

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LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

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Open interest: 280

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Light dawns at SunAlliance

WELCOME to the 20th century, Royal & SunAlliance. In a bid to inform the public and insurance brokers of its new identity, the insurance group has dug deep into its pockets, picking up a thing or two about popular culture along the way.

Talking at yesterday's results meeting, Richard Gamble, RSA's pin-striped group chief executive, made it clear he believed the group's costly new advertising campaign, featuring a host of showbiz celebrities was well worth the money.

"Everyone here now knows who Mystic Meg is, including Roger Taylor and I, who were a bit confused in the early days," he admitted.

TO celebrate the new millennium and its 150th anniversary in one fell swoop, Price Waterhouse is having a party. Word has it the beancounters have put down a deposit of around £300,000 for champagne to mature in 1999. Who says accountants are boring?

Welcome return

SIR Colin Corness is returning to his roots. The chairman of Glaxo Wellcome was yesterday appointed a non-executive director of Taylor Woodrow. Sir Colin, who cut his teeth at the construction group in 1954, left ten years later to pursue his career at Redland. As the first Cambridge graduate to be taken on at Taylor Woodrow he started on a salary of £500 a year. "How are you, cock? Before you start, as far as I'm concerned, you don't know nothing," was the greeting from Tom Reeves, his first boss. Sir Colin modestly tells me: "He was quite right of course. So I immediately set out to remedy this."



"Give up the horses put a few bob on Ladbrooke"

Chairman Marj

MARJORIE "the motivator" Scardino is making waves at Pearson. Nothing as dated as shoulder pads for the feisty Texan. The first and so far only female chief executive of a FTSE 100 company charges into work wearing a baseball cap and sneakers. A source at a recent black tie dinner described Scardino's military trouser suit as "distinctly Chairman Mao style". Makes a change from the leg-of-mutton sleeves.

Hoax calls

INO, the Irish group for the unemployed, has discovered a new hazard associated with organising a picket. Spurred into action by a claim from ISME, the Irish small business group, that a large portion of the unemployed are "social misfits", INO went about organising a picket of ISME's headquarters in Dublin. Then the group received mysterious calls from people claiming to be officials in the Department of Social Welfare: they said that unemployed persons who took part in pickets could forfeit benefit because they were not available for work. Only after it was established that the calls were hoax, could INO go ahead with yesterday's picket.

MORAG PRESTON



ECONOMIC VIEW

ANATOLE KALETSKY

Lilley is going the right way but he has failed to grasp the nettle

Privatising pensions is an excellent idea if it is properly implemented

Things that seem too good to be true usually are. This principle should be borne in mind in response to the sudden news that Peter Lilley has discovered a way of privatising Britain's state pension system that will leave everyone better off and impose no perceptible losses on anyone at all. In saying this I do not wish to suggest that privatising pensions is a "bad thing". On the contrary it is, in principle, an excellent idea, reflecting the fact that government in a prosperous modern economy should be in the business of providing public goods and services that affect society as a whole, or which, by their nature, cannot be adequately or efficiently secured by individuals.

Examples of such legitimate and essential state activity include the redistribution of income and wealth through the tax system, provision of education, health and public order, support for the poor, subsidising culture, arts and scientific research, and insuring workers against unemployment.

Paying for the perfectly predictable and easily foreseeable exigencies of retirement and old age has few of the social characteristics of such useful state activity. Thus the pensions business is not an appropriate place for the State, except to the limited extent of providing a modest safety net for those elderly people who were too poor, too unlucky or too improvident during their working lifetimes to save up for their own retirement.

These categories were very large in 1945 when the Labour Government introduced the state pension. But the 50 post-war years of rapid economic growth changed all this. Most workers now earn enough to put away reasonable sums to provide for their own retirement. By the time they retire they can hope, if they act sensibly, to accumulate substantial savings, both in the form of financial assets and as equity in the housing market. Because of the rapid increase in real earnings since the 1940s for workers and pensioners, most of the victims of poverty are no longer pensioners but the children of single parents and the unemployed.

For these reasons and many others, it is absolutely right that the State should gradually withdraw from its temporary post-war role as a pensions paymaster for all and become instead a provider of last resort for the poor, the unlucky and the improvident.

Why then do I object to Mr Lilley's proposals? Because Mr Lilley, influenced no doubt by electoral timing, is trying to sell his plan on a false prospectus. By pretending that pensions can be reformed in a way that involves no sacrifices or concessions he is seriously misleading the public and diverting attention away from big economic and political choices that have to be made in the next few years, to largely illusory "structural" problems in the never-never land of the late 21st century.

The illusory nature of the "demographic timebomb" Mr Lilley is so bravely offering to defuse is illustrated in the top chart, which shows the International Monetary Fund's estimate of the extent to which the pension benefits promised over the next 60 years by the governments of G7 countries exceed the payroll taxes they have arranged to collect. Clearly a demographic timebomb threatens Germany, France, Italy and Japan. But the fact is that Britain does not face any serious long-term

problem in paying the present state pensions and uprating them in line with inflation. This is largely because of the cuts already made since 1980 in state pension entitlements.

What then are the real issues to be addressed in a serious pension reform? I would suggest the following:

- After the cuts of the 1980s, the present basic state pension is scarcely adequate for dignified survival, and its value will continue to fall drastically in relation to average earnings. The present generation will be condemned to near-poverty unless they make private provisions for retirement yet only half the workforce is covered by occupational pension schemes. Something needs to be done — and done urgently — to ensure that people who are now in their 30s and 40s are better off than those in their 50s and 60s.

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Arjo shares boosted by unexpected profits leap

By FRASER NELSON

SHARES of Arjo Wiggins Appleton performed their sharpest leap for five years after the Anglo-French paper producer reported a bigger recovery than expected.

Its heavy restructuring program, which involved cutting its European staff by 12 per cent and closing two factories, delivered cost savings of £8 million over the year. Stabilisation of pulp prices and the resuscitation of general demand helped it to lift pre-tax profits 97 per cent to £134 million, beating forecasts by some £14 million.

The shares gained 17½ p to 187½ p, their highest for 11 months. Andrew Shaw, finance director, said the pulp prices were still gently declining, which promised that the

recovery would continue. He said: "There is no cloud hanging over us at the moment, and unless there is another collapse in pulp prices, there is no reason why the recovery should not continue."

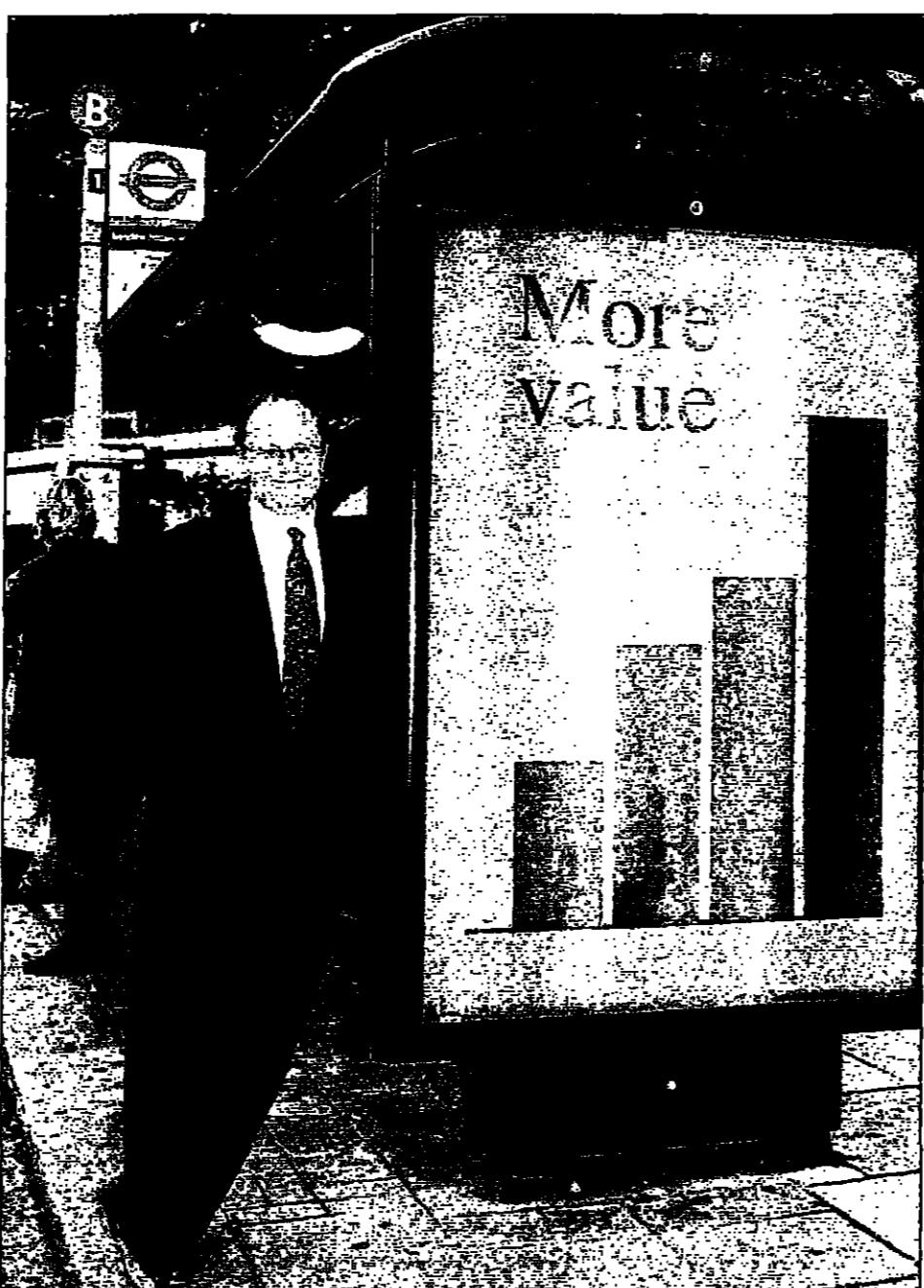
However, the company gave warning that some businesses were building up private paper reserves. Demand could be threatened, it said, if they started using their own stocks rather than buying new paper in the market.

Arjo spent £20 million on job cuts and factory closures over the year and plans to spend a further £30 million completing the moves this year. However, it hopes to recover this through cost savings this year, and expects to strip £50 million of costs in 1998.

The thermal paper division, which produces paper for fax machines, suffered from a difficult market over the year. The company said it will close a plant in Lincoln, and move a scaled-down operation to its plant in Cardiff. It said this was typical of the changes it is making throughout Europe.

Appleton Papers, its North American business, staged a strong comeback in the second half, with operating profit doubling to £66.7 million (£39.5 million). The woodfree paper business, which it bought just before the collapse of the market in 1995, also began to recover.

While group turnover was stagnant at £3.57 billion, the cost savings helped earnings to shoot to 10.2p (2.3p) before exceptional. In spite of this rise, the final dividend is frozen at 7.5p, with a final 4.6p due on May 28. The company, formed when Wiggins Teape Appleton merged with Arjomari Prioux soon after being floated off by BAT industries seven years ago, is now expected by the City to make £210 million during 1997 and deliver earnings of 16.2p per share. The shares closed at 185½ p.



Roger Parry beside an Adshel that publicises the company's message

Safeway in talks on Ulster deal

FTZ WILTON, the Dublin-based company that owns the Wellworth chain of supermarkets in Northern Ireland, should reach agreement about a proposed joint venture with Safeway before the end of this month, a source close to the company said yesterday (Eileen McCabe writes).

Although both sides refuse to comment, it is believed that a sell-off of at least 50 per cent of Wellworth to Safeway for about £150 million is high on the agenda. There are also suggestions that the two might agree a joint venture to operate outlets in the Irish Republic.

Wellworth is a long-established major player in Northern Ireland, with 37 stores and a 21 per cent market share.

Heal's poised to raise £12m with flotation

By GEORGE SIVELL

HEAL'S, the department store group bought by its management from Storehouse in 1990, is to list on the London Stock Exchange with first dealings expected on March 24.

The flotation will enable NatWest Ventures to sell its holding and management shareholders to sell part of their holdings. It is understood that the three executive directors and two senior managers will share about £1.5 million of the proceeds. It is expected NatWest will take out £8 million. The placing will raise £12 million out of which £1.75 million will go towards investment in existing stores and to develop new sites. Heal's has stores in central London and at Guildford in Surrey.

Heal's made a pre-tax profit of £1.8 million in 1995 last year, against the £30 million loss incurred after heavy redundancy costs in 1995.

The results were entirely the result of good housekeeping; a number of loss-making contracts had been shed.

Mr Gains said that the company's prospects would be still further enhanced this year after the flotation of its Access division.

Its shares gained 7p yesterday, to 135p. Earnings were 8.1p per share, against a 17.6p loss last time.

A final dividend of 2p is due on July 1, lifting the total to 3p, after 2p last time.

John Mowlem builds to a seven-year high

By FRASER NELSON

JOHN MOWLEM, the construction group that returned to profit last summer, yesterday reinforced its recovery with its strongest set of final results for seven years.

The company made a pre-tax profit of £16.7 million last year, against the £30 million loss incurred after heavy redundancy costs in 1995.

The results were achieved in spite of a 3 per cent drop in revenues to £1.41 billion.

John Gains, appointed chief executive two years ago, said

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BUSINESS ROUNDUP

IMI expands with \$39m deal in US

IMI, the UK engineering group, is expanding its drink dispensing interests through the purchase of Wilshire, the privately owned corporation, for \$39 million. Wilshire is a leading American manufacturer of drinks dispensing equipment. In 1996 the business earned pre-tax profits of \$2.8 million on turnover of \$60 million. The net value of assets being acquired is \$8.5 million.

Wilshire employs about 400 people and has manufacturing plants in Connecticut, Illinois and Ontario. IMI will fund the acquisition from existing bank facilities and is expected to enhance earnings in 1997. Gary Allen, chief executive of IMI, said Wilshire's customer base in the US was complementary. "The potential for its highly regarded products is significantly enhanced through IMI's global sales and distribution network."

Bidders secure Whessoe

THE overseas bidders for Whessoe, the engineering group based in the North East, announced yesterday that they spoke for 51 per cent of Whessoe. Navia and Endress & Hauser said they now own or have agreed to acquire shares representing a 51 per cent stake. After settlement of outstanding share purchases, the offer will be declared unconditional, the companies said, adding that the offer will lapse if referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Ocean rises by £9m

OCEAN, the transport group, raised profits before tax and exceptional items rose to £18.3 million, from £15 million, on turnover that rose to £102.7 million, from £87.3 million. More reported an increase in the yield per advertising panel achieved in the UK and Ireland, reflecting improved service levels and better marketing as well as strong underlying economic growth.

The £77.3 million acquisition of Wennergren-Williams, the Scandinavian Group, completed in December, did not make a significant contribution to the results.

Roger Parry, chief executive, said: "The marketing initiatives taken early in the year in the UK and Ireland have been a great success. At the end of the year we made radical changes in France and Belgium, which will bring benefits in the future."

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE



■ THEATRE 1

The American stage adaptation of *Birdy* is an offbeat but fascinating new offering for the West End



■ THEATRE 2

Volcano's latest touring production, *The Message*, makes for a strange and puzzling night out



■ MUSIC 1

Simon Rattle and the CBSO resurrect the quintessential Sixties work, Berio's *Sinfonia*



■ MUSIC 2

... while fragments of unfinished Schubert are tantalisingly reconstructed at the Festival Hall

THEATRE: An intriguing transfer from book to film to fringe to the West End stage. Plus an Irish comedy; and a muddled message

Ruffled male feathers

Could there be something right with the West End? There have been no fewer than four openings this week on the Great Grey Way, among them a play I never thought any impresario would be brave enough to lift from its slot on the Hammersmith fringe last year.

Is there really an audience for a title-character who spends nine-tenths of the evening perched on or near a bedstead, arms folded like wings, head jerking this way and that, mouth silently cooing? If so, we shall all have reason to rejoice, for *Birdy* itself is the theatrical counterpart of one of those rare, speckled warblers that send ornithologists into the hills at dawn with high-tech binoculars in their knapsacks.

The American novelist William Wharton published his *Birdy* in 1978. Our own Alan Parker made a movie of it six years later. Now Naomi Wallace, an American dramatist who has staged most of her work here, has adapted the novel into a highly original play about

ALFRED HITCHCOCK would undoubtedly have judged a pallet of bathroom tiles as too short on uncanny fascination to use as a McGuffin, but for Owen McCafferty, it serves just fine to animate the plot of his latest play. Setting *Stone the Crow* in a half-finished bathroom peopled by tired, thwarted labourers strongly suggests, however, that uncanny fascination is hardly what McCafferty is searching for here.

As the members of a crew of Irish tilers finish off a large job, they become convinced that a few boxes of tiles, apparently overlooked and then forgotten by their owner, might, when converted into hard currency through the black market, provide the answer to all their problems.

Petesey (Anthony Brophy), the hard centre of the crew, and

the transformation of two human fledglings into two wounded grown-ups — or, as she writes in the published text, "about the dehumanising process boys are forced to undergo in order to become acceptable 'men' in our society".

Her case is strengthened by the fact that much of the play occurs in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Events in a particularly dehumanising male pursuit have shattered one man's mind and his best friend's jaw. Matthew Wait's Birdy, reduced as he is to a sort of avian catatonics, is shut up in a psychiatric hospital. But Rob Morrow's bandaged Al, brought in as a last-ditch cure by a desperate army doctor, is not a lot less trapped himself. Inside him, ominously festering, are fears, angers and bitter memories of the father who hit and humiliated him. Only at the end does either man achieve any kind of release.

It doesn't sound enough either to sustain an evening or to round out a couple of main characters. Wal-

lace's answer to these worries, which is to give each man a boyhood double and skip to and fro in time, brings with it the danger of distracting us from the urgency of the situation and lowering dramatic tension. And maybe there were moments when I began to want to leave Adam Garcia's Young Al and Tam Williams's Young Birdy, busy bonding on top of a spinning, tilting white disc, and return to the painful present as it unfolded in the white-tiled room below. But Wallace's deft writing and Kevin Knight's skilful direction nipped impatience in the bud.

One boy, obsessed with everything winged and feathered, dreams of flight and at one point transforms himself into a cloth-and-aluminium flying machine. The other does endless press-ups and prepares for the day when he will be able to beat up his abusive

father. Their dual oddities lead to some lively scenes, especially a mildly homoerotic one (Wallace neither ducks nor labours the sexual implications) in which Young Al prepares a quaking Birdy for a date at the school prom. But the serious point, that one boy is escaping his maleness and the other is in danger of turning it into macho display, is seriously made.

Yet it is the events beneath that really grip, thanks to Wait's bravura bird imitations and Morrow's ability to suggest a mix of sensitivity, love and rage behind the drolly detached manner he adopts for the benefit of Richard Durden's exasperated shrink.

Am I right to think that the evening's weirdest moment, when Al gently spits chewed food into Birdy's gaping beak, was more disturbing and touching back in W6? Even if so, this is fascinatingly offbeat stuff to find in the West End.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

painting rivulets) like unwanted mortar among the shiny tiles, their conversations — and some attractive ensemble playing — come into focus.

Lacking in pretension of any sort, *Stone the Crow* is careful not to pose or answer too many questions. Even when the story does obliquely raise realpolitik ethical issues, the intention never seems to be to tease out answers, but simply to evoke a way of life in which work is by definition draining, unsatisfying and ultimately pointless. What exactly McCafferty wants us to do with this distinctly uncheery information remains unclear, as enigmatic indeed, as the stack of tiles that is snared under a tight spotlight as the play draws to a close.

LUKE CLANCY



Birds of a feather: Matthew Wait as the damaged Birdy is befriended by Rob Morrow's Sergeant Al

Night on the tiles

Stone the Crow
Druid, Galway

Socrates (David Ganley), more of a muddler than a philosopher, fantasise that cash injection is just what is required to straighten out the kinks in their relationships with wives and children. Ding-Ding (Patrick Walden) has more than a hint of Cyril Cusack at his most curmudgeonly) is on the brink of retirement without the resources to buy the window-cleaning round that might modestly fund his retirement.

The only one with a dream

THIRTEEN KENTON



Flying in the face of credibility in Nigel Charnock's *The Message*

CONCERTS: Berio's *Sinfonia* is revived; and Schubert's Tenth Symphony gets a speculative performance

Essence of the Sixties

CBSO/Rattle
Birmingham

of half-understood words and semi-detached phonemes?

It is true, on the other hand, that the *Sinfonia* is a powerful Sixties fetish and that Rattle, the CBSO, John Whiting and Electric Phoenix have long experience of collaborating in it. But, next to the massive sincerity of Messiaen's *Et Exspecto Resurrectionem Mortuorum* and the wit of Lutoslawski's Cello Concerto, it does seem to have something cynical and self-conscious about it.

Both the other items in the programme have their show-business aspects. Composed

specifically for Mstislav Rostropovich, the concerto has that cellist's personality written all over it. Happily, Lynn Harrell has the imagination to make the most of the music-theatre element, impersonating the Rostropovich role in such a discreet way as to convert it, eventually, to his own use. The brass attacks on the soloist he seems to take personally, and when it takes off with the melodic line of the Cantilena he does it with irremovable lyrical conviction.

If the CBSO percussionist in *Et Exspecto* received almost as much applause as the soloist in the Cello Concerto it is because no one can resist the sight of the largest of all beaters repeatedly being taken to the largest of all orchestral tam-tams. It was a legitimate visual effect, a token of Messiaen's faith in the monumental and a compensation for what even Symphony Hall cannot offer in terms of the acoustic atmosphere of a Sainte Chapelle or a Notre Dame de Chartres.

GERALD LARNER

THE removal of Danny Baker's soccer phone-in, *The Baker Line*, from Radio 5 Live on Wednesday nights marks a watershed. Critics of the BBC who worry about falling standards now have their answer, for here is the BBC at last calling: enough is enough.

Baker was dumped because he had, as the BBC put it, crossed the line between being lively, humorous and controversial and being insulting to the audience. Yes, but there is more to it than that. The audience for football phone-ins is not easily insulted, often tending towards excessive abuse of teams and, especially, referees. Baker went because he poured petrol, not water, on to the

Picking up the pieces

Philharmonia/Dohnányi
Festival Hall

ing a reconstruction, this creative artist offers a "restoration" of the sketches. Berio fills the gaps with passages of dense polyphony, fashioned from those sketches but in contemporary idiom. Introduced by a tinkling celesta effecting a "dissolve", their suspension of metre and tonality throws an unsettling shadow across the bridge between the centuries.

Berio's rendering also takes up the challenge of the fragments for Schubert's Tenth, but instead of attempt-

ing a reconstruction, this creative artist offers a "restoration" of the sketches. Berio fills the gaps with passages of dense polyphony, fashioned from those sketches but in contemporary idiom. Introduced by a tinkling celesta effecting a "dissolve", their suspension of metre and tonality throws an unsettling shadow across the bridge between the centuries.

After this, the "Unfinished" Symphony itself provided an unusually satisfying epilogue. From the hushed, mys-

terious rendering of the opening theme on lower strings, it was evident that Dohnányi intended to cast this work, too, in a Romantic light. As is customary, Dohnányi takes the Andante con moto with considerably more gravity, more of a valedictory quality, than one suspects he would if it belonged to a completed work. Yet the vision was genuine, the conviction persuasive.

Schubert was approached from a different angle with a group of Lieder arranged by various composers for baritone and orchestra. If Weber's transcription of *Ihr Bild* was austere, those by Brahms of *Mennon* and *An Schwager Kronos* were typically warm, while Gilman's *Du bist die Ruh* evoked tranquillity with sustained strings and harp. Taking over from Olaf Bar at short notice, Hakan Hagegard failed to convince that the intimacy of the songs with piano could be captured in another medium.

BARRY MILLINGTON

merly known as *The Baker Line* will be conducted in a more seemly way from now on. Tony Hall, head of BBC News, and Roger Mosey, Controller of Radio 5, have performed a real service by drawing a line in the sand, by making it clear that phone-ins about sport do not have to sound like a post-match argument in a pub park.

So now Baker and his friend Chris Evans have departed from BBC programmes in short order, each having discovered that the BBC is bigger than any of its personalities. That is good news for those who were beginning to wonder.

PETER BARNARD

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Readers of *The Times* get the hottest cinema ticket of the year FREE and enjoy a private screening of *The English Patient*, starring Ralph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas.

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CHANGING TIMES

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flames. The last straw was when Baker urged listeners to conduct a campaign of abuse against the referee who awarded a controversial penalty in the Chelsea-Leicester Cup replay. This is pure incitement, pure pandering to yobbery, and as such it has no place on a network which expects to be taken seriously.

Baker has also expressed the view that "most referees need a good slapping". And, having been told to "shut up" by a caller, Baker shouted at his producer on-air about the quality of the callers and said that he wanted his old produc-

tion to be conducted in a more seemly way from now on. Tony Hall, head of BBC News, and Roger Mosey, Controller of Radio 5, have performed a real service by drawing a line in the sand, by making it clear that phone-ins about sport do not have to sound like a post-match argument in a pub park.

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PETER BARNARD



■ POP 1

Manufactured for the mass market: what goes on behind the scenes to get a band like Boyzone to the top



■ POP 2

Playing on a radio near you: why the Mutton Birds are New Zealand's hottest new property



■ POP 3

The songs are slow and the mood is sombre on Nick Cave's latest album, *The Boatman's Call*...



■ POP 4

... while the Finnish composer and producer Jimi Tenor plays it cool on his third effort, *Intervision*

Ever feel you've been had?

Nothing is left to chance in some record companies' profit-greedy manipulation of the charts – and the hero-worshipping kids

Well, it won't be news to you by now that the music industry isn't run like a Buddhist kibbutz overflowing with light, love and fairness, and founded on strong socialist principles that ensure bands and punters alike get a good deal. No, the music industry is a two-timing, back-stabbing, second-guessing, drug-riddled hellmouth with two faces. one nostril and a brain the size of a chicken's.

But what may surprise you is the extent to which the whole thing has been reduced to a game, and how the charts, the press and, in some cases, the music itself have become a meaningless pretence in short: how bands and their careers are being reduced to virtual reality.

As you may have noticed, there was a bit of a flap last week when the BBC declared that the charts were basically unreliable. Again, this wasn't really news: the charts are like sailboats – there's always been a certain amount of record company rigging. But, in the past year or so, the companies have become so good at getting the chart position they want that the first week of a single's life is entirely manipulated. Multiple formats, first-week sale prices of 99p, dishonestly gained knowledge of where chart return shops are situated and, if all else fails, a squad of people in a van buying up copies of the single mean that many executives have been claiming their "high chart entry" bonuses on an almost weekly basis.

The press, too, is not a bastion of truth and impartiality – no shock when considering the tabloids, but what about the dedicated music publications where Groop Dogdrill and Arab Strap are big (well, biggest) news? There are still journalists who accept payment for bestowing the accolade of "single of the week". Expensive lunches, alcohol, trips abroad and cocaine are all employed in getting bands more press. And, with the recent mini-boom that Britpop brought about, some record companies' largesse has even started to extend towards people working in art and layout – just to make sure everyone is "onboard" with a new band, y'know?

Of course, it's all only rock'n'roll, and where would it be without drugs, bribes and a bit of under-the-table, how's-your-father, keep-your-mouth-shut? But the music industry is the UK's third biggest business, so it means millions of pounds' worth of commerce is being manipulated. And, even worse for people who love music, it means that an awful number of good bands on little, independent labels simply can't

afford to get into the charts, while rubbish bands on big labels regularly stroll into the Top Ten.

Yeah, and about all those formula bands doing well at present: what else are Boyzone, Spice Girls, Backstreet Boys and Peter Andre if not Virtual Pop, designed by committees of businessmen heady on demographics, served by production-line songwriters, and presented by sculpted, styled, scripted two-bit hoofers? These stars are *designed*, and their success is not down to the wonder of the music, or the lightning brilliance of their personality: merely how much money their record company has to throw at them, and how canny their manager is.

Of course, the pop world has always had manufactured bands; but the "credible" alternative world is now getting into the act, too. Alanis Morissette, one of last year's biggest-selling artists, was given a complete image overhaul and an album's worth of songs by her manager, a rather uncredible forty-something fella. So much for the radical feminist posturing.

Kula Shaker, another "hip, alternative" band, have been the subject of reams of print in the industry magazine *Music Week*, with label bosses and managers congratulating themselves on their marketing techniques and press strategy, the building of the band's underground credibility and so forth. The pressure to change yourself, to become more marketable, saleable, perfect and virtual extends down to the tiniest band: Steve Jones of Babybird was "informed" before *You're Gorgeous* became a hit and he was still a little fella who scraped into the Top 60; that a couple of weeks at a health farm might not go amiss, as he was a stone over the ideal weight to get into the Top Ten.

Bands are offered "training" for interviews, teaching them the kind of thing they might want to have an opinion on if they want lots of press coverage. Virtual personalities are so much safer than the real, loose-canoodling thing.

So, when everything your pop star wears, says, sings or does is decided by management; when most of what the press reports about them is paid for; when the awards they win are fiddled to the point of ridiculousness and the chart position they reach is false and wrong and cheated for, what is real? And what is virtual?

What, and where, is British music among all these holograms, flowcharts, strike-teams and stylists? And what was so wrong with bands getting to No 1 simply because people liked them, and their music?



Everyone loves the Spice Girls. If they didn't, it would have been because someone in marketing goofed

Paul Sexton discovers why New Zealand became a crowded house for the witty and pop-wise Mutton Birds

Kiwi seagulls deny they have Finns

Does the new person to call the Mutton Birds "the new Crowded House" qualify for a broken nose? Perhaps not, but it won't be long before New Zealand's hottest property of 1997 can stop smiling politely at the comparison.

The Mutton Birds are now playing on a radio near you with *Come Around*, a song that manages the juggling act of deadly infectiousness and lyrical perspicacity. A song written by an antipodean group with a sense of humour and an absence of sacrifice. OK, it does sound familiar.

"When people don't know you at all, some kind of label is useful," says chief Mutton Bird, Don McGlashan, "and I suppose Crowded House is the only band from New Zealand that most people would know about. It's good to be compared with a really good band, and they've inspired a whole generation of Kiwi musicians."

"But, if you are just talking about music, once people know us, they'll see that we're noisier than Crowded House and we don't play our instruments as well."

Come Around is an aperitif for *Envy of Angels*, another gold-selling album in the Birds' home nest (they are named after a type of seagull) that will be their official long-playing debut in this country. The album was recorded in Wales with producer Hugh Jones, a Brit nominee this year for his work with Dodgy and the Bluetones. At the further

risk of incurring that bunch of fives, the album shares with Neil Finn and friends an aura of unpretentious ingenuity, freshly-baked-this-morning melodies and dark, pensive lyrics.

Such an alluring mixture is in part the result of multi-media background. The Mutton Birds is his second successful band in a CV that also includes film scoring — notably for Jane Campion's *An Angel at My Table* — a classical music education, acting and musical theatre.

"My dad worked in coal mines in New Zealand," he says. "He was kind of a thwarted musician, so he made sure there were heaps of beaten-up secondhand instruments arriving in the house, hold all the time that I could have a go at from the age of about five. By the time I was a

teenager, I could hold a tune on a lot of things."

McGlashan played in a brass band, had a job in an orchestra for two years and went on to lead the Top Ten local band Blam. Blam, Blam from the drums. These days he also plays a mean euphonium, both on record and as a splendidly incongruous addition to the Mutton Birds' live performance.

McGlashan toured the arts

festival circuit in the late 1980s with the ensemble musical *The Front Lawn*, playing seasons at Edinburgh and London's Donmar Warehouse. Returning after his collaboration with Campion to the environs of rock'n'roll, he founded the Mutton Birds to fast acclaim at home, but a country with a population less than half that of London brought artistic limitations. "The gravy train doesn't pick

up passengers in New Zealand," he says. "It does in Australia, then it sort of misses out New Zealand and goes somewhere else."

"The music scene there is a really nurturing one for writers and bands, because it's not really connected to the industry, it's just an exotic blip at the edge of the radar screen. We make more music than the people can consume — it's a music mountain, like those European wine lakes — but it's not a very good environment for making a connection with an audience."

Hence the Mutton Birds' awesome collection of Air Miles and, these past few months of recording and gigging, adopted Brit status. It has also meant the departure of guitarist David Long — "He was too homesick: he didn't like the phone ringing and hearing he was going to Holland the following day." McGlashan also admits that the nomadic life brings moments of wilderness.

"There's a 'letters to home' quality about this album, a kind of claustrophobia," he says. "Trouble with You especially is a late-night, staring-at-the-wallpaper kind of song. But we are more reconciled now to the idea of being stateless."

● The single, *Come Around*, is released this week by Virgin. The album, *Envy of Angels*, follows in May. The Mutton Birds play London's Shepherd's Bush Empire on March 15.



Noisier than Crowded House and they don't play their instruments as well: the needlessly self-deprecating Mutton Birds

In the deepest, darkest Cave

NICK CAVE & THE BAD SEEDS *The Boatman's Call*

(Mute Stumm 142 £13.49)

TO HAVE gone from the violent fiction of his last album, *Murder Ballads*, to the intimate confessions of *The Boatman's Call* might have seemed like a sizeable leap of the creative imagination for a less literate talent than Nick Cave. But there is a universal quality to Cave's writing which enables him, like a good playwright or novelist, to tease out core emotional truths from his dark musical voyages, irrespective of where the subject-matter takes him.

The songs on *The Boatman's Call* are uniformly slow and, compounded by Cave's sombre vocal signature, their mood is more often desolate than not. "There will always be suffering! It flows through life like water," he croons in *Lime-Tree Harbour*. Many are about the break-up of his marriage to Vivian Carneiro, and songs such as *Where Do We Go Now But Nowhere?* and *Far from Me* are suffused with pain regret and bitterness: "It's good to hear you're doing so well! But really can't you find somebody else that you can ring and tell?"

Cave also supplies candid details of his liaison with Polly Jean Harvey, the obvious subject of *Black Hair* and *West Country Girl*: "With a crooked smile and a heart-shaped face Comes from the West Country where the birds sing bass."

As an album, *The Boatman's Call* provides the most eloquent testimony yet of Cave's stark powers of observation and wry poetic skill. But you would not be encouraged to try living with him as a result of hearing him it.

JIMI TENOR

Intervision

(Warp 48 £14.99)

US 3

Broadway & 52nd

(Blue Note/Capitol 8 30027 £13.49)

IT MAY be no more than a coincidence that the two coolest albums released this week are aimed squarely at the young dance/club market, yet are both steeped in the history and culture of jazz.

Classically trained on saxophone, piano and flute, the Finnish composer and producer Jimi Tenor marries the sophisticated harmonies of jazz fusion to the old-fashioned funk grooves of 1970s soul, and then sprinkles the mixture

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345-023 498

POP ALBUMS

with a fine coating of 1990s lounge-lousy lunacy on his third album, *Intervision*.

Given a Sooty-style organ treatment, the Duke Ellington standard *Caravan* is underpinned by a riotous jungle-goes-Latin percussion track. There are echoes of *Hot Rats* era Frank Zappa on *Tesla*, while *Downtown* updates Curtis Mayfield's *Superfly*-period soundtrack style. The ingenuity of the arrangements and sheer excellence of the performances are rewarding enough, but the marvel of it is that here is a modern dance album rich in old-fashioned melodic detail.

Us 3, the outfit led by British DJ and producer Geoff Wilkinson, continue their officially sanctioned raiding of the Blue Note jazz label archives on *Broadway & 52nd*. The album combines samples of old jazz numbers, including Horace Silver's *Sayonara Blues* and Wayne Shorter's *Indian Song*, with new recordings, all topped off by the quickfire vocalise of East Coast rappers KCB and Shabam Sahdeed. The result is smart and chic.

VAN MORRISON

The Healing Game

(Exile/Polydor 537 101 £13.99)

"HERE I am again... Where I've always been," Van Morrison sings on the title track of his 28th album. While other long-running acts take great pains to ensure that, every so often, their work involves some element of "re-invention", there is a comforting inevitability about a new Morrison album.

We know there will be songs about the great spiritual matters of life, love, faith and remembrance of better days. These will be strung together in gruff, throwaway phrases that are then irritatingly echoed in a Celtic-gospel style by Georgie Fame or one of the other backing singers (in this case Katie Kissoon and Brian Kennedy). There will be exquisite horn arrangements, old-fashioned organ and piano parts (Fame again) and perhaps a bit of crusty harmonica from the Man himself, but never anything so vulgar as a synthesizer or guitar solo.

Sure enough, it all goes exactly according to plan once again on *The Healing Game*, and it all sounds every bit as marvellous as before, albeit without quite the same degree of sunny optimism that informed his Mercury Music Prize-nominated album, *Days Like These*.

DAVID SINCLAIR

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1 (-)	Pop	U2 (Island)
2 (2)	Spice	Spice Girls (Virgin)
3 (10)	Everything Must Go	Manic Street Preachers (Epic)
4 (5)	Ocean Drive	Lighthouse Family (Wild Card)
5 (1)	Attack of the Grey Lantern	Manson (Parlophone)
6 (27)	Dreamland	Robert Miller (Deconstruction)
7 (12)	Beautiful Freak	Eels (Dreamworks)
8 (11)	K...	Kula Shaker (Columbia)
9 (17)	Travelling Without Moving	James Rado (Sony 5)
10 (13)	Older	George Michael (Virgin)

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● Figure in brackets denotes last week's position

DAVID SINCLAIR

UNITED NOTIONS

TRILOK GURU

The Clipse

(CMP CD 85)

THE BOMBAY-born percussionist Trilok Guru has been ploughing his highly individual world music/jazz/Indian percussion furrow since the mid-1970s, so it is singularly appropriate that this album should be dedicated to the most important pioneer of such fusions, Guru's erstwhile leader, the late trumpeter Don Cherry.

Guru is adept not only at assembling multi-national casts for his projects, but also at blending their various contributions into coherent musical statements. Here, the voice of Geetha Bennett, the cello and bass of Sweden's Lars Danielsson, the trumpet of Italy's Paolo Fresu and the *kaval* (wooden pipe) of Bulgaria's Todoros Spassov are among the providers of an extraordinary range of sounds and textures.

The whole is firmly held together by the virtuosic percussion of Guru himself, but the album's highlight is a haunting version of *Low Years*, by Cherry's most famous collaborator, Ornette Coleman.

CHRIS PARKER

JAZZ ALBUMS

LESTER YOUNG

The Kansas City Sessions

(Commodore CMD 14022)

ALTHOUGH often thought of as a Dixieland label — other reissues in this series include CDs by Wild Bill Davison and Pee Wee Russell — Commodore also documented a great deal of mainstream jazz between 1938 and the mid-1950s.

These sessions — involving Lester Young on clarinet and tenor sax, and featuring trombonist/guitarist Eddie Durham, trumpeters Buck Clayton and Bill Coleman, and trombonist Dicky Wells as well as the Count Basie rhythm section of guitarist Freddie Green, bassist Walter Page and drummer Jo Jones — are classics of the genre.

They are wonderfully informal and relaxed, but effortlessly showcase the skills of the participants, whether easing their way through the blues or exploring the possibilities of standards such as *Them There Eyes* or *I Got Rhythm*.

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■ POP 5

They were underground heroes and darlings of the critics. Now Morphine are hitting the big time



■ POP 6

Looking for attention: Gene show off their strident new image in a clever Norwich gig



■ TOMORROW

The European premiere of Ariel Dorfman's *Widows*: read Benedict Nightingale's view



■ TOMORROW

Do the French actually deserve their reputation for producing the world's most erotic cinema?

Careful with that axe

LIKE Aztec Camera and Prefab Sprout before them, Gene are part of that fine tradition of British groups whose mastery of the well-crafted song has earned them considerable praise but established no clear identity. In Gene's case, their image problem was compounded by a debut album (*Olympian*) that rang with echoes of the Smiths.

Perhaps this is why, two years later, their new record, *Drawn to the Deep End*, adopts a more strident, attention-grabbing style, and the live set is almost exclusively derived from the new era. The only exceptions are two of the

LIVE GIG

Gene
UEA, Norwich

band's earliest songs: *Be My Light, Be My Guide* and *For the Dead*.

Their show begins with *New Amusements*, with its dramatic switches of tempo and mood, of loud riffs and elegant trills. Only with *Where are they now?* does the pace slacken. Until then, Steve Mason's guitar has brutally kicked the tunes into life; now, for a brief interlude, he caresses them. Later he will contribute a silky country rock solo to *Why I Was Born*.

It is also in these more restrained moments that singer Martin Rossiter's voice works best. Dressed in a suit and open-necked shirt, he resembles a rather staid member of the professional classes. He is flanked by a rhythm section — Kevin Miles (bass) and Matt James (drums) — of similarly stolid aspect. His singing, though, is all passionate torment. He is also master of the dramatic pause. Midway through the lovely *Speak To Me Someone*, the song cuts dead. Rossiter waits and waits and waits, restarting with a sense of drama that Shirley Bassey might envy.

All this anguish and drama is framed, however, by a touch of irony. The stage recreates a 1950s provincial theatre red velvet curtains edged with gold tassels form a proscenium arch. Maybe, it suggests, all the passion is only playacting. The effect is to add a mildly disconcerting, alienating edge to a clever show.

JOHN STREET

Suspect by name and eccentric by instrumentation, Morphine have made it against all odds. David Sinclair reports

Mr Sandman, send me a dream

If there is one thing we have learnt about American pop in the 1990s it is that we should never write off the outsiders. From the hardcore punk of Nirvana to the geeky, oddball pop of Beck and Eels, "alternative" performers are no longer content to languish in the margins of rock. Instead, they have successfully re-educated the ears of mainstream audiences to the peculiar requirements of their music with spectacular results.

Even so, what hope of chart success is there for a trio from Boston, Massachusetts, called Morphine, with a line-up featuring only a baritone saxophonist, a drummer and a singer who plays a two-stringed slide bass guitar?

Full of sinuous grace and neat, punchy tunes, their fourth album, *Like Swimming*, is their most commercially viable work yet. But surely such music, with its dark, woozy textures, implied jazz leanings and idiosyncratic disdain for treble frequencies, is never going to be more than an acquired taste for the cognoscenti?

Not according to Mark Sandman, the group's singer and songwriter. "Right from the start we've had noticeably diverse audiences," he says. "People with skateboards and people with babysitters at the same shows. Our music has been used in television shows and movies and as background music for sports shows and during the links in the MTV Awards, and to me that means it's an accessible sound."

And, although in Britain and Europe Morphine remain attached to the small, independent record label Rykodisc, in America they have just signed a deal with Dreamworks, the new company with major promotional muscle that is home to George Michael and the Eels. Long admired as underground heroes and darlings of the critics, Morphine are suddenly starting to look like big league contenders.

Yet it all started so casually. Sandman, horn player Dana Colley and original drummer Jerome Dupree (later replaced by Billy Conway) had all played in various other bands before they drifted together to form Morphine. With their minimalist instincts and loose, adventurous performing style, they had no trouble fitting into Boston's



"Our music has been used in television shows and movies and during the links in the MTV Awards. To me that means it's an accessible sound," says Morphine's Mark Sandman

relaxed and fluid musical environment with its network of impromptu loft parties and word-of-mouth gigs, so unlike the formal, and highly pressurised, club scenes in New York and Los Angeles.

"We kept it pretty low-key, practically a secret," Sandman says in his deep, sleepy drawl.

"There was no hype, and really no ambition either. Our focus was to develop this core sound that we had."

"On the first album [*Good*, released in 1992] I played a one-string bass, which meant everything was in the same key. At that time we were big into the key of D. We've opened it out a bit since then. This new album we're checking out the key of A."

The band's unique sound rests on the twin pillars of Sandman's slinky bass lines and Colley's equally deep, grumpy horn parts. An admirer of jazz saxophonist John Coltrane, Colley has been influenced on a more practical level by the guitar playing of Jimi Hendrix and Billy Gibbons of ZZ Top, while Sandman also throws Muddy Waters and Prince into his personal mix of favourites.

Originally a guitarist himself, Sandman's fascination with customised instruments goes back to the days when he played in an unknown group called Supergroup alongside Chris Balow, another two-stringed bass player, who has since found fame and fortune with the Presidents of the United States of America.

"When we were in Supergroup we used to spontaneously compose pop songs based on titles suggested by the audience, and do all kinds of crazy improvisational stuff," Sandman says. "Chris is a master at making up

lyrics, an absolute genius. We used to tape the shows and we got a lot of ideas that eventually became real songs for both Morphine and the Presidents. Their song *Kitty* is named after the cat that lives in my house. Morphine's song *Sheila* is about its owner."

Sandman's noir-ish lyrics are the perfect foil for the band's languid sound. "I move

slowly underwater, I know my way around," he sings on *Wishing Well*, while his bass laps fitfully around the ankles of the bear. "Early to bed, early to rise/Makes a man and woman miss out on the night life," he warns over the tip-toe funk riff of *Early to Bed*.

"Night life is what happens after dark," Sandman says. "It's not necessarily pouring lots of liquor into your stomach. We're not a hard-partying band. But I would say we are definitely nocturnal."

The dark corners are what make the band's music so intriguing. "The day they find a cure for pain is the day I throw my drugs away," Sandman sang on the title track of their 1993 album, *Cure for Pain*. But isn't Morphine a

pretty sinister choice of name for a pop group?

"You could look at it that way. It's a drug that is used routinely in hospitals for relieving pain. There's nothing sinister about that," Sandman says, rather disingenuously. "It's just a name that stuck."

• Morphine's album, *Like Swimming*, is released by Rykodisc on Monday

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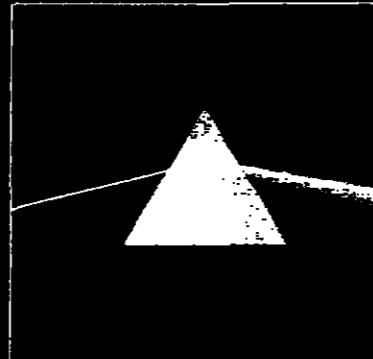
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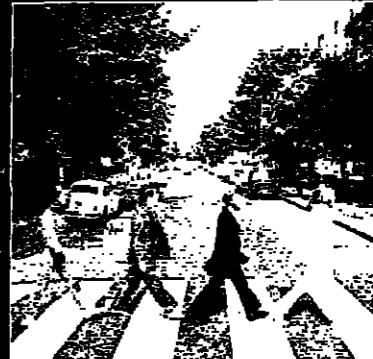
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Court of Appeal

Whether asylum seeker can become refugee

Adan v Secretary of State for the Home Department
Noor v Same
Lazarevic v Same
Radivojevic v Same
Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Hutchison and Lord Justice Thorpe
Judgment February 13

An asylum seeker unable to return to his country of origin might be entitled to recognition as a refugee under article 1A(2) of the Convention and Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees (1951) (and 1971) and (1969) (and 1966), provided only that the fear or actuality of past persecution still played a causative part in his presence in the United Kingdom.

The Court of Appeal so stated, inter alia, allowing the appeals of Hassan Hussein Adan and Lool Noor, and dismissing the appeals of Botan Lazarevic and Zoran Radivojevic from the decisions of the Immigration Appeal Tribunal dated January 19, 1996, March 22, 1996; January 22, 1996 and May 7, 1996 respectively. The tribunal had held in each case that the asylum seeker was not entitled to refugee status.

Mr Nicholas Blake QC and Mr Raza Hussain for Adan and Noor; Mr Ian Lewis for Lazarevic and Radivojevic; Mr David Pannick, QC and Mr Mark Shaw for the Home Secretary.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that the appeal raised a number of difficult questions as to the construction and application of the Convention, one of them so fundamental that it seemed remarkable that the court

was now, 46 years on, confronted with it for the first time. That fundamental question concerned the very definition of the term "refugee" in article 1A(2) of the Convention.

The issue was whether it was always necessary for a person unable to return to his home country to show a current well founded fear of persecution or whether a historical fear might sometimes suffice; whether, to put it more precisely, the Home Secretary was right in submitting that to be a refugee a person must in every case have a current well founded fear of persecution who were to be returned to his country of origin, or whether, as the appellants argued, if in fact he was currently "unable . . . to avail himself of the protection of his country of origin, it was sufficient that at some past time he had come to be abroad through fear of persecution; fear which made him either flee his country of origin or, if he was already abroad, remain abroad due to circumstances arising in his country of origin during his absence.

There were significant advantages in being recognised as a refugee beyond free movement.

In the first place, there were advantages under the Convention, such as entitlement to travel documents to enable them to travel abroad and entitlement to the same treatment with respect to public relief and assistance as was accorded to nationals. They might not, therefore, be deprived of benefits to which they were entitled, if in the United Kingdom, refugee asylum seekers were.

Second, under national law too, there were significant advantages

in recognition, albeit conferred as a matter of discretion. One advantage was that refugees obtained indefinite leave to remain after four years, whereas those granted exceptional leave must generally wait for seven years.

Similarly, refugees were entitled to immediate family reunion whereas those with exceptional leave normally had to wait four years and, moreover, a wait policy was applied to Somali refugees enabling them to bring in their extended families.

The point, when it was likely to be determinative of whether or not refugee status in fact arose, could only ever be decisive when an asylum seeker was in reality unable to return home; if he could return home then he must, unless he could establish a present fear of persecution.

Equally the point would never be decisive unless the fear of persecution existed at some time past but had now ended. The coincidence of these two circumstances would be rare, which explained why the issue had not previously arisen, save at tribunal level.

Under article 1A(2), which his Lordship proposed to break down into a series of clauses and number for convenience, a refugee was someone who:

(a) owing to well founded fear of being persecuted for [a Convention reason] was outside the country of his nationality, and (b) was unable to avail himself of the protection of his country, or (ii) owing to such fear was unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country, or (iii)

Second, under national law too, there were significant advantages

being outside the country of his former habitual residence, (b)(i) was unable to return to it, or (ii) owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for [a Convention reason] was unwilling to return to it.

The strength of the Home Secretary's argument, for saying that no one was entitled to refugee status unless at the time his claim was determined he was in present fear of persecution were he to be returned home, lay in the use of the phrase "is outside" in clause (i); its weakness lay in the difficulty in finding convincing reasons why the definition also included clause (ii).

As to clause (b)(ii), Mr Pannick submitted that that further test was needed to deal with people who have a well founded fear and who wish to return but who were simply unable to return.

As to clause (b)(iii), a clause qualified, unlike clause (b)(ii), by the requirement that the applicant's unwillingness be "owing to such fear", that additional element in the definition. Mr Pannick sought to explain thus: "the second alternative, being unwilling to return, does need to be qualified. That is because there may be many reasons why a person is unwilling to return. So the draftsman has made it plain that a mere unwillingness is not enough. He must be unwilling because of 'such fear', that is the current well founded fear previously mentioned."

Returning to clause (i), as a matter of language it seemed to his Lordship that the phrase "is outside", although couched in the present tense, could sensibly be construed to have any one of three meanings.

It could mean, as Mr Pannick submitted it did, was outside owing to a well founded fear at the time the asylum application was under consideration; or it could mean has at some time however long in the past come to be outside on account of such fear, and for whatever reason had never thereafter left; or that his Lordship understood to be Mr Blake's finely preferred submission for the appellants, it could mean had come to be outside, or being already outside, not to return, owing to past persecution and still remained abroad on that account, in the sense that the causal link remained operative and had never been broken.

While his Lordship readily accepted that the issue was one of considerable difficulty, and that anomalies might appear to arise either view, he had concluded that Mr Blake's arguments were to be preferred and that an asylum seeker unable to return to his country of origin might indeed be entitled to recognition as a refugee provided only that the fear or actuality of past persecution still played a causative part in his presence in the UK.

Lord Justice Hutchison delivered a judgment agreeing on the majority and Lord Justice Thorpe delivered a judgment disagreeing with the reasoning of the majority on the above issue but concurring with the result.

Solicitors: Wilson & Co, Tonbridge; Suttor & Harlan, Acton Treasury Solicitor.

Fire authorities owe no duty of care in tort to owners

Nelson Holdings Ltd v British Gas plc and Others

Before Mr Justice Rimer
Judgment December 5

Fire authorities ordinarily owed no duty of care in tort to individual property owners when fighting a fire.

Mr Justice Rimer, sitting an additional judge of the Queen's Bench Division, held in open court after a hearing in December, allowing an application by Surrey County Council, then defendants to strike out a claim for negligence brought against it by Nelson Holdings Ltd following substantial damage by fire to its property in Surrey.

Mr Michael Kent, QC, for Nelson; Mr Malcolm Chapple for British Gas and Southern Electricity Board; Mr John Ross for Surrey County Council.

MJ JUSTICE RIMER said that at 7.15am on October 16, 1987 Surrey Fire Brigade attended the property to extinguish a fire. A gas leak was identified during the operation and the fire brigade evacuated the premises and called British Gas to attend to cut off the supply.

The brigade remained at the scene awaiting British Gas, and

some two hours later, before British Gas had arrived, there was a gas explosion and a further fire which caused substantial additional damage.

Nelson alleged, inter alia, that the fire brigade was negligent in failing to take adequate steps to turn off the gas supply and prevent further emission of gas into the property and the subsequent explosion. Breach of statutory duty was not pleaded.

His Lordship reviewed the relevant legislation. It did not impose any duty on a fire brigade to attend a fire but conferred on it a power to do so. He concluded that the considerations in *Stovin v Wise* (The Times July 26, 1986) [1986] AC 923 as to when a statutory power could give rise to a common law duty of care did not apply. The fire brigade had already exercised that power in attending the fire and directing to await the arrival of British Gas to attend to cut off the supply.

The question his Lordship had to consider was whether, having exercised its power to attend the fire, Surrey Fire Brigade owed Nelson a common law duty to the manner in which it discharged the operation and the fire brigade evacuated the premises and called British Gas to attend to cut off the supply.

His Lordship referred to the test in *Carpent v Dickman* [1982] AC 609 and in particular whether it was fair, just and reasonable for the duty to arise.

His Lordship considered Judge

Havery's reasoning with which he respectfully disagreed. He found it impossible to accept that the fire authorities should be subject to a duty of care in tort, its provisions

imposed such a duty on the fire brigade. He reviewed a number of recent decisions in which the issue had been considered.

In *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Great Britain) v Yorkshire Fire and Civil Defence Authority* (The Times May 8, 1996) Judge William Crawford, QC, held that it would not be fair, just and reasonable, and would be contrary to public policy to impose a duty.

In *John Murray (Archives) Ltd v London Fire and Civil Defence Authority and Others* (The Times April 22, 1996) [1996] 1 WLR 1553 Judge Richard Havery, QC, had held that the fire authority was negligent in failing to take adequate steps to turn off the gas supply and prevent further emission of gas into the property and the subsequent explosion. Breach of statutory duty was not pleaded.

However, in *Capital Counties plc v Hampshire County Council and Others* (The Times April 26, 1996) [1996] 1 WLR 1553 Judge Richard Havery, QC, had held that the fire authority was negligent in failing to take adequate steps to turn off the gas supply and prevent further emission of gas into the property and the subsequent explosion. Breach of statutory duty was not pleaded.

There was a risk that such a duty would lead to defensive fire fighting. It was inevitable that fire officers would deal with some fires more successfully than with others and it would be intolerable if, in the difficult and dangerous emergency situation in which they were often required to operate, the fire services were subject to the risk of having their every action crawled over in litigation in an attempt to retrace from the ashes of the disaster precisely what happened and how.

Further, there was no indication

that the fire authority was liable for the damage caused by the fire.

As far as the crucial question of whether it was fair, just and reasonable for the fire brigade to be subject to any such duty was concerned, his Lordship preferred the reasoning in *Latter Day Saints and Murray*, and found that it was not.

However, the likely consequence of imposing a duty would be that any claims against the fire authorities would be prosecuted by insurance companies. His Lordship could see no good reason why the policy of the law of tort should move in a direction which required public funds to be applied in improving insurance companies' profits or mitigating their losses.

His Lordship was aware that all three cases were on their way to the Court of Appeal, and that consequently the law was in some state of uncertainty. Nevertheless, he was not bound to follow Judge Havery's decision and he had come to the clear view that the court owned Nelson no duty of care.

Solicitors: Beachcroft Stanleys; Christopher Cunningham, Haslegrave & Co; Barlow Lyde & Gilbert.

Money abiding event not subject to charge

McKay v Legal Aid Board

Before Lord Justice Leggatt, Lord Justice Pill and Lord Justice Ward
Judgment January 23

When a party was granted legal aid to defend proceedings, money previously paid by him into court by way of security for costs was not money which were the subject

matter of the proceedings in issue, but were to abide the event, and therefore were not subject to a charge by the Legal Aid Board.

The Court of Appeal so held allowing the appeal of Keith Ian McKay against the order of Mr Justice Gage on June 16, 1995, to the effect that the board was not entitled, under the Legal Aid Act

1988, to a charge over the sum of £13,738 paid by Mr McKay into Hemel Hempstead County Court to defend a money claim brought against him by others, and subsequently ordered to be paid to his solicitor, and that claim was compromised and dismissed. The Court of Appeal granted a declaration that the board was not entitled to a charge over the sum.

Miss Elizabeth Gumbley for the appellant; Mr Charles Utley for the board.

LORD JUSTICE WARD said that in the course of the county court proceedings against the appellant, he had paid, under court order, the sum of £13,738 into court to abide the event.

After judgment was entered against him by the claimants and the money paid into court ordered to be paid out in their favour, the appellant obtained a full legal aid certificate to set aside the judgment and, if successful, to defend the action.

The appeal did succeed, the claim was dismissed and the sum in court was directed to be paid to his solicitor. The board claimed a right to a charge over the sum.

His Lordship said that the issue was whether section 6(6) of the 1988 Act applied so that the fruits of a successful application to set aside the judgment were now liable to the board.

Following the relevant test to be applied, see *Hudson v The Law Society* ([1981] AC 124, 181, 185, 187), the first question whether the money in court was recovered or preserved, depended on whether it had been paid to the board.

There was no doubt, in his Lordship's view, that the money which had been paid to the claimants and so became their money was recovered by the appellant's application to set aside the judgment, in the sense that it had to be paid back. Furthermore, by being left in court to abide the event, it was preserved.

However, the claim was for damages for breach of contract for failure to complete building work and to rectify work not properly carried out, and the appellant denied he was under any contractual obligation, or that he was in breach. The issue in the pleadings did not in any way relate to the money in court in any sense.

On that analysis the appellant's solicitors were obliged to seek recovery of the money in court. The regulations did not state, as easily as they could have done, that any money in court paid back to the assisted person's solicitor was subject to the charge. Whether or not it was so subject had to depend on the facts of each case.

If different answers could be given to the first question, the appeal depended on the answer to the second question, what were the proceedings in which the appellant was represented with the benefit of legal aid?

Lord Justice Pill gave a concurring judgment and Lord Justice Leggatt agreed with Lord Justice Ward.

Solicitors: Alison Trent & Co; Mr R. Hamilton.

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House of Lords

Liability for helicopter passenger limited

Fellowes (or Herd) and Another v Clyde Helicopters Ltd

Before Lord Mackay of Clashfern, Lord Chancellor, Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead, Lord Hoffmann, Lord Hope of Craighead and Lord Clyde

[Speeches February 27]

The flight of a helicopter used within the regional boundary of the police authority, which had hired the helicopter, was not an international carriage and was governed by Schedule 1 to the Carriage by Air Provisions (Application of Provisions) Order (SI 1987 No 480). The police officer on the helicopter performing police duties, with no duties towards the operation of the helicopter, was a passenger within article 17 of the Schedule.

The liability of the carrier for each passenger was limited by article 22 and any action for damages, however founded, could only be brought subject to the conditions and limits set out in the Schedule.

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EDUCATION

David Jamieson on Labour plans for bright youngsters and right, Doug McAvoy questions educational strategy

Gifted and young: we could do better

I know of no country other than Britain that has in its language pejorative words such as "boffin" and "egghead" to describe the gifted and very able. In Britain, attitudes towards high achievement in education are often negative. A political climate needs to be developed that raises our expectations of educational achievement in all children, including the gifted. All schools should seek to create an atmosphere in which to excel is not only acceptable but desirable.

A cultural environment in which ridicule and discouragement is meted out to those of high intellectual ability must be challenged. The education of gifted children should be seen within the wider context of raising educational standards for all children.

Britain survives economically on

Extension classes could take place after school

invention, innovation and development. These abilities are vital if we are to compete and survive in the global marketplace of the 21st century. The gifted children of today are most likely to be at tomorrow's cutting edge of economic success. Their needs must be met if Britain is to become a leading and competitive progressive economy after the millennium. The Conservatives have resorted to the simplistic devices of selection and the Assisted Places Scheme as methods of tackling the education of gifted children. Labour intends to offer every child the best start in life and to end the existing culture of complacency.

The issue of provision for gifted children is based on the ethos of equality of opportunity. Labour is convinced that the state sector has a duty and responsibility to provide an appropriate education for all children, including the gifted. Parents with gifted children should not feel any need to put their child through independent schooling.

In general, gifted children are defined as the top 2 to 3 per cent of children. Gifted children possess an unusually advanced intellectual or performance ability, with an outstanding ability in general or academic intelligence, creative thinking, mechanical or athletic ability, interpersonal or intrapersonal skills or visual or performing arts.

Acceleration learning, which Tony Blair and David Blunkett support, is a useful strategy that can take a number of flexible forms, such as movement up by years or placement in higher group in a specific subject. However, gifted children should be given appropriate peer-group placement and groupings of gifted children can provide the social skills, competition and teamwork that gifted children need to develop their potential. There should still be procedures to ensure that such groups are not isolated from the normal school environment.

Extension classes could take

place at lunchtime on Saturday mornings or any other appropriate time and could make use of longer-term projects that do not have to fit

within the restrictions of the nor-

mal school timetable. It is important to follow an open-door policy and apply it during these extra study periods. There is evidence that such classes can contribute to the general raising of standards, performance and expectations in the school as a whole, especially in the top 10 per cent of ability.

There is a need for a standard recognition of degree credits to enable gifted children to undertake part of a degree before going on to university to complete it. Thus a form of credit bank could be founded to enable gifted children to remain within their own age group yet achieve a base from which to springboard to higher education.

Last year I visited Monkseaton

Community High School in Whitley Bay near Newcastle to see a project in which ten sixth-formers at the school had embarked on an Open University maths foundation course. At the end of the year, all of them passed, five winning distinctions. The students learnt about self-motivation, unsupervised study and personal organisation — qualities that will stand them in good stead in higher education.

Extracurricular courses, clubs and competitions, operating with local branches of gifted children or-

ganisations, local universities or colleges, or subject-based professional associations, should be encouraged. The use of older pupils or adults as mentors (under adequate and ultimate teacher supervision) could help to develop their skills and knowledge. Gifted children need to acquire empathy with and insight into children from a broad spectrum of abilities and interests. Comprehensive schools that develop and nurture a specialisation, for example in technology, science or music, should be assisted, on the basis that they remain non-selective.

Labour envisages a new Teachers' Centre as part of the new university industry on the Internet designed to provide teachers with the materials and advice that will enable them to raise standards and teach to the best of their ability. We will enable schools to make the most of information technology and all schools should be cabled up to the information superhighway. Internet relay talk could provide gifted children with access to tuition and experts outside their own schools without the need to travel.

There could be greater co-operation

and association with, and possibly integration of, the national (and international) organisations that exist for gifted children to assist with the formulation and development of LEA and school policy on gifted children.

Britain must rise to the challenge set by countries such as Korea and Singapore and aspire to the highest level. Remoulding British attitudes to education and developing the provision for gifted children could play a central role in this and will also give us a head start over our European competitors.

During the Industrial Revolution, Britain relied upon innovation, enterprise, investment, capital, machines and building to succeed. As we enter the new century the neglect and loss of such talent would severely hinder our country's development. We need to invest in the skills and talents of our people. That is why it is vital that we give the special needs of our gifted children a high priority.

• David Jamieson is Labour MP for Plymouth Devonport and a former vice-principal of a community college. *Labour's discussion document, The Education of Gifted Children, is available from David Jamieson, MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.*



Sufiah Yusof was educated at home and is on her way to St Hilda's College, Oxford, at the age of 12

What's the best source of information on independent schools? Susan Elkin sifts through the publications



Boys at Eton College: but how do "first-time" parents find out what Eton is really like?

Guides to independent schools are big business. Any prospective parent — especially a first-time "consumer" who may not know much about private education — is likely to encounter *The Gabbitas Guide to Independent Schools* (£1.99), *Hobsons Guide to Independent Boarding Schools* (£9.99), *Independent Schools of the United Kingdom* (£9.99) and the *Independent Schools Yearbook* (£24), to mention just a few. There are also numerous guides and supplements published by — or in connection with — magazines and newspapers.

How do you distil the truth from the hype? The answer is to make a few educated guesses or discreet inquiries about how the guide's contents have been assembled, how it has been financed and who will profit from it. Bear in mind that many guides are actually quite expensive.

There are two types of guides. One contains a series of advertising and promotional articles about schools and issues related to them. These have been written by the schools as part of their marketing strategy.

The second type of guide is produced independently.

The glossy colour *Hobsons Guide to Independent Boarding Schools*, for example, falls into the first category. Even Eton College has an advertisement in it (at £575 for a half-page). Some schools — for example, Merchant Taylor's School, in the 1996-97 edition — opt for a full-page (£1,300) "case study" of a past pupil instead of, or as well as, a half- or full-page school "profile".

The name and crest of Mill Hill School Foundation elegantly decorates a laminated plastic bookmark attached to

the *Hobsons Guide* with a tasteful satin ribbon in Prussian blue. I doubt that Mill Hill was accorded this privilege without paying for it. Of course, there is nothing wrong with any of this, but prospective parents need to be aware that information may be anything but impartial.

These guides usually contain informative commentary by renowned experts in and supporters of independent education. The *Hobsons Guide* contains articles by Enid Castle, former Principal of Cheltenham Ladies' College, and by Graeme Scarle,

the National Director of Independent Schools Careers Organisation (ISCO).

Most of these guides also publish full listings and basic information about the schools in their category — at no charge to the school. The *Gabbitas Guide to Independent Education*, whose third edition has just been published by Kogan Page, lists schools by area. As with *Hobsons*, the more detailed accounts of certain schools which occupy about half of this 600-page book are paid for (at more than £1,000 each) by the schools themselves, so

disinterest is thin on the ground. That is not, however, to belittle the usefulness of the general information about independent schooling, addresses of education organisations and comprehensive data about available scholarships and other details that *Gabbitas* amply provides.

The second type of school guide is based on an inspection or appraisal of the school by an outsider, for which the schools pay nothing. One example is *The Daily Telegraph Schools Guide*, whose third edition is due out later this year. The "inspectors" are

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CRICKET

Sussex members urged to join Pigott's rebellion

By SIMON WILDE

NOT many people give up a good job in order to fight for the future of an organisation from which they were permanently sacked four years ago, but that is what Tony Pigott has done. He tendered his resignation as Surrey's assistant coach and second XI captain last week to attempt to revitalise Sussex, a club to which he gave 16 years of dedicated service and which is now in turmoil.

The Sussex committee has long been accused of mishandling players, never more so than in recent months, during which six capped players — Wells, Salisbury, Giddins, Law, Speight and Hall — have gone for various reasons, but it may come to most regret the departure of Pigott, who enjoyed three good years with Surrey after leaving Sussex.

Pigott is demanding the wholesale resignation of the committee and has called an extraordinary general meeting to try to bring this about, although it may not come to that; the committee met last night to discuss his action and Alan Caffyn, the chairman, may announce his resignation today.

Giddins: dismissed

Pigott, who runs a cricket management company that handles Alec Stewart, Graham Thorpe and Mark Ramprakash, has an emotional attachment to Sussex cricket dating back to his boyhood, when he worshipped Ted Dexter and John Snow from the boundary at Hove.

His revolutionary fervour has been fanned by what happened after he arrived at Surrey, where members angered by years of under-achievement, demanded — and got — changes in management personnel and were rewarded last year with the



Wells, above, sacked as captain, accepted an offer to join Kent while, below, from left, Law (Essex) Speight (Durham) and Salisbury (Surrey) also moved



club's first trophy in 14 years. Pigott, 38, recently addressed a meeting of the Sussex Cricket Society and said that if the members cared about Sussex they, too, should "rise up".

Pigott said his words met with a favourable response and, on Tuesday, Richard Barrow resigned from the committee — "after wrestling with my conscience for some time" — in protest at the lack of management and poor communication, complaints that lie at the heart of Pigott's campaign. As an example, Pigott cites the treatment of Wells, who was dismissed as captain last October and left for Kent. Wells had received an assurance that he would be reappointed, but Barrow said this was not mentioned at the meeting at which he was sacked.

Wells has since been singled out for criticism by Caffyn, prompting one recently departed player to use the word "scapegoat". "Nobody is accepting the blame for what is happening," Pigott said. "Everyone seems to be more concerned with their own position than with the club itself."

"Such things will not attract players and the youngsters who are coming through will not stay if the side is neither winning nor moving forward. Which sponsors will want to be associated with Sussex? Who will want to invest in the redevelopment of the Hove ground?"

Following Barrow's departure, four of the nine places on the committee now need to be filled after the annual meeting later this month. But Pigott, though he seeks a seat, does not want cosmetic changes, and neither does Barrow.

"Sussex cannot go on as they are," Barrow said. "The current management style is clearly not working and a dynamic approach is imperative for the club's prosperity. It is essential that the remaining committee members meet with Tony prior to the AGM ... the last thing we want to promote is public wrangling."

Pigott sees the extraordinary meeting as a chance for members to decide the future of the committee. "To turn things round will require radical changes and long-term planning," he said.

"What is needed is new, young people with fresh ideas and who know something about cricket. There is one former cricketer on the committee, John Barclay, and he has been away for the last four months. There is not even

a cricket committee. Trouble has been stirring up for more than 20 years. Man-management in cricket is not good and Sussex are no exception."

Among the 50 signatories Pigott gathered to force the EGM, which would probably take place next month, are former player in David Smith, Tony Buss, Peter Graves and Allan Green. If Pigott does not find a role at Sussex, he will return to Surrey, who are keeping his job open until his future is clear. "The two clubs are like chalk and cheese," he said, "but Surrey have come out of bad times and I don't see why Sussex cannot do the same."

Kent choose Wright

JOHN WRIGHT, the former New Zealand opening batsman and captain, who became one of the most popular and respected cricketers in England during his 12 seasons with Derbyshire, is set to return to the county game as Kent coach (Pat Gibson writes).

Wright, 42, is expected to be named today to succeed Daryl Foster, the West Australian who retired in January for personal and family reasons after five years as coach and cricket manager at Canterbury.

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Referees need time to consider

From Mr Steven Dunkey

Sir, We all know it wasn't a penalty and suspect that, the instant after he gave it to Chelsea against Leicester City, Mike Reed, the referee, realised it wasn't one either. The problem was, and always is in such circumstances, that once he had awarded the penalty, Reed could not, dare not, alter his decision.

There was no going back, Chelsea took the spot kick, scored and one goal won the tie. Victory without honour was written all over the Chelsea players' faces, defeat by official mugging was on the faces of those in the Leicester camp. Neutrals despised that the laws of the game so implemented had failed at the most extreme of moments when best quality decision-making is demanded. And that is all Reed had, an extreme moment in which to decide, with no time to consider.

I propose the following:

1. The referee (or referee's assistant) sees an offence that might give rise to a penalty award (currently he would give a penalty instantly).

2. The referee blows his whistle and stops play, in response to what he has witnessed.

3. By use of a clear, purpose-devised arm signal the referee indicates to players and spectators that a penalty award is under consideration.

4. The referee and both assistants must immediately confer as to whether, based on the evidence, a penalty award is justified or not.

5. Having considered the matter himself, and conferred with his assistants, the referee makes the decision as to a penalty award or not.

6. If a penalty is awarded, the kick is taken in the usual way. If there is no penalty, the

referee resumes play in a way he deems appropriate.

7. Scrap the obstruction offence within the penalty area.

The nature of the officials' conference will depend on the clarity of the event giving rise to a penalty award being considered; for instance, hand ball on the goalline by a defender to prevent a goal may be so blatant as to merit only a moment's conference, whereas a less clear offence might require more time.

Crucially, a conference between the three officials will provide the referee time to consider, where at present there is no, or insufficient, time even to reconsider. Players and spectators will feel that all has been done to ensure fairer decision-making.

Yours sincerely,

STEVEN DUNKEY,

14 Glanis Drive,
Stone, Staffordshire.

From Mr G. I. Williams

Sir, I am becoming increasingly concerned with the poor standard of refereeing in the Football League.

It would appear that the role of the assistant referee is merely to copy the signals of the referee rather than to assist him by indicating when misconduct or other incident has occurred out of the vision of the referee.

While much of the criticism referees receive during a match is based on heat-of-the-moment bias from supporters, there does not seem to be a match that passes without some refereeing *fau*s pa.

Although I accept that referees, like all human beings, are fallible, mistakes are made all too frequently, especially over offside, fouls and misconduct.

Yours faithfully,

G. I. WILLIAMS,

The House,
St Dunstan's College, SE1.

not be appropriate to empower the trust to impose a "windfall tax" on the extraordinarily high profits being made by directors and club officials on flotation of their clubs, whose assets have undoubtedly increased by virtue of the Football Trust expenditure.

At a time when income to the trust is falling, as a result of the National Lottery, and small clubs are facing bankruptcy and hardship, would it

not be appropriate to empower the trust to impose a "windfall tax" on the extraordinarily high profits being made by directors and club officials on flotation of their clubs, whose assets have undoubtedly increased by virtue of the Football Trust expenditure?

Yours faithfully,

J. CARTER,

140 Longwood Road, Aldridge,
Walsall, West Midlands.

SPORTS LETTERS

Rowell tactics questionable

From Mr Simon Goldberg

Sir, In reporting France's stunning victory over England (March 3), both David Hands and David Miller question Jack Rowell's failure to make tactical substitutions in the second half of the game.

Rowell

MOTOR RACING

Old rivals and new faces, but Williams still team to beat

OLIVER HOLT



They say it is going to be a fine season, this year ahead in Formula One, more evenly contested, perhaps, with more elements of the unexpected. Yesterday, before the cars had even taken to the track, it got off to the best of all possible starts. Sentimentality, humour and an oddly touching rapprochement between old enemies, the first press conference here at Albert Park had it all.

It started with Michael Schumacher, that cold-blooded racing machine, talking about the recent birth of his first child, a baby daughter called Gina Maria, in terms so candid and open that the shield of invulnerability that always appears to cloak him seemed to be melting away in front of our eyes.

"Being there when the little one came," he said, "was the best moment of all the experiences I have had in my life. So many people try to explain what it will feel like to be a father, but you understand nothing until the moment when you become a father yourself. In the hospital, all the sisters were trying to explain things to me about the way to hold her and showing me how to do things with her, but I just wanted to hold her myself. It is an amazing thing which you do not expect will happen to you and you feel it so strongly."

Alongside him on the plat-

questions all the time and when things are blown up between us. Let's turn it around and put it this way. We are not enemies any more."

Before they descended from the stage, Hill signed his part of the treaty, too, rationalising away the enmity that used to exist by comparing them to two boxers going into a ring, having to motivate themselves to hurt the other.

"A rival is anyone who is there in competition with you," Hill said, "and if there is just one guy between you and what you have been trying to achieve, the rivalry is distilled into one person. It is not a personal thing. It is just born out of the intensity of the desire to win."

Outside, in the sunshine of the Australian autumn, other things had changed, too, since last season. The name "Prest" was written above one of the garage doors to signal the dawn of the Frenchman's new team and the end of Ligier. "Stewart" made its first appearance, too.

At McLaren-Mercedes, gleaming silver cars, designed to evoke the spirit of the old Mercedes "Silver Arrows", sat proudly on their stands, the traditional red and white livery of the Marlboro dominated colour scheme that decorated the cars of Ayrton Senna, a thing of the past.

Outside the Williams camp, German journalists mingled with the English and the Canadians, keen to establish themselves with Heinz-Harald Frentzen's new team and, further up the pit lane, the Japanese tyre company, Bridgestone, put the final touches to their preparations to equip five teams and challenge the monopoly of Goodyear. In wet races, in particular, their excellence is expected to cause some surprising results.

If some things change in Formula One, some things remain the same. Jacques Villeneuve, the new Williams team leader, has inherited the mantle of favourite that has been thrust on his predecessors so often throughout this decade, and did not attempt to deny that he was the man to beat. With all Williams' problems — their ongoing prosecution for the manslaughter of Senna, the loss of their brilliant designer, Adrian Newey, and the furore surrounding their sacking of Hill — the chasing pack may get closer to



Villeneuve, the championship favourite, checks his Williams car yesterday

them this year, but it is unlikely that they will get close enough.

Villeneuve topped most of the times in pre-season testing and has even hinted that the car was not even running to its full potential. "I think Williams is the favourite," he said, "and the fact that I have been with the team a year should benefit me the most. As a driver, you always think you are the best and if you do not believe that, how can you expect a team and their sponsors to believe it when they are thinking of signing you?"

Since it became evident that Hill would be taken out of the championship equation because of his move to Arrows, most have assumed that the race for the title this year would be a straight fight between Villeneuve and Schumacher. Yesterday, though, the German added more weight to the theory that others might be involved, too. Ferrari, searching for their

first drivers' championship for 18 years, have not made the advances they had hoped for during the winter and, even though Schumacher said he hoped to be fighting for the title by the end of the year, may find themselves behind not just Williams, but also Benetton and McLaren when the grid for the race on Sunday is decided tomorrow.

Both Hill and Nigel Mansell, the former British world champion, have suggested Berger, the oldest driver in grand prix racing this year, as a surprise contender for the title. His team-mate, Jean Alesi, and the McLaren drivers, David Coulthard and

Mika Hakkinen, may also win races.

Farther down the grid, there is a refreshing wealth of talented young drivers clamouring for success, a healthy alternative to the sponsor-rich dross that often occupies places in the middling teams. Both Giancarlo Fisichella, at Jordan, and Jan Magnussen, at Stewart, could be world champions of the future.

Yesterday, though, belonged to the world champions of the past, to the memories of the great rivalry between Hill and Schumacher. Yesterday, the German added more weight to the theory that others might be involved, too. Ferrari, searching for their

London University to lead flotilla

MORE than 2,000 competitors are racing in the 57th Women's Eights Head on Saturday (Mike Rosewell writes). London University, who have beaten the Oxford and Cambridge women's boat race crews in the past fortnight and who have six of their crew on trial for Great Britain, will lead off the 242-boat flotilla from Mortlake to Putney. Mike Spracklen, in his new post as national women's coach, is, unlike his predecessor, Bill Mason, allowing squad members to race in their club crews.

Apart from London University, squad members are found in the Tideway Scullers crew, starting third, and notably the Thames crew, starting fourth, which includes five members of the women's team at the Atlanta Olympic Games.

Kirsten bowing out

CRICKET: Peter Kirsten, the former South Africa Test batsman, will make his final first-class appearance in the game between Border and the touring Australians which starts today. Kirsten, 41, has enjoyed a career spanning 25 years, some of it spent with Derbyshire, for whom he made 228 against Somerset in 1981. He exceeded that score by scoring 271 for Border against Northern Transvaal in 1994 to become the first South African batsman to score eight double centuries. He has a career-average of 44.63 and has made 57 three-figure scores.

Wales date for Harvey

RUGBY UNION: Ben Harvey, who has helped Brunel University College to the final of the British Universities championship, will play at scrum half for England against Wales in a student international at Pontypridd on March 14.

ENGLAND STUDENTS: J. Febbo (Exeter), B. Johnson (RMC Shrewsbury), F. Waters (Bristol), M. Denney (Exeter), M. Singer (Cambridge), M. Jones (Aston), S. Harvey (Brunel UCI), C. Webb (Nottingham), J. Dickin (Exeter), A. Reuben (Bristol), T. Earle (Cambridge), C. Webb (Oxford), M. Mills (Sheffield), P. Hallam, A. Yates (Bradford), R. Beale (Nottingham).

McColgan chases record

ATHLETICS: Liz McColgan will attempt a record-breaking fourth victory in the BUFA Great North Run on September 14. McColgan, winner of her first title in 1992 when the event incorporated the world half-marathon championship and again for the past two years, is out to improve on the record of Liza Ondieki. The Australian's three victories in the 1990s were not in successive years and McColgan is convinced she can complete a hat-trick.

Banbury warm-up

LACROSSE: The England squad for the world championships in Japan next month will take part in an international tournament at Banbury this weekend, when five of those who narrowly missed selection — Rachael Shetty, Caroline Cade, Nicky Farman, Emily Ormerod and Vicki Penn — will try to make a point when they play in a President's team, including a number of former internationals, against England on Sunday.

Lincoln make progress

TORPIDS: There was little movement by the leading crews in the men's and women's top divisions on the second day of Oxford University Torpids on the Isis yesterday. The first six crews in the men's first division rode over Lincoln and Oriel II were the only colleges to progress. Christ Church have dropped four places over the two days, as have Pembroke, who were bumped by University and Lady Margaret Hall in the women's first division.

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White missed a golden opportunity to win the game with a flourish on move 22. He would have played 22 Ra87 Kh7. 23 Qh5 (Black's pawn is pinned) 23 Kc8. 24 Qg8-. Kh6. 25 Qh7 mate. Another opportunity beckoned on move 26 when 26 Qxh8-. Kxh8. 27 Rxh7 would have left White with a clear material advantage. As played, Black's king escaped from the bombardment and he emerged with a winning endgame.

The Spectator Trophy for the winning team was presented by Bruce Anderson to Michael Stern, captain of the winning side, while the new Killian Trophy, in honour of Lord Killarny who led the Lords team for many years until his death last year, was presented jointly to Lord Winston and Nigel Griffiths who were the two top scorers in the match.

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FOOTBALL

Injuries take gloss off welcome win by Middlesbrough

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

RELEGATION. The mere mention of the word sends a shiver down the spines of those entrenched in the lower reaches of the FA Carling Premiership. Squandered chances and lost points can play havoc with the nervous systems of the most robust players and the most resolute manager.

However, what the threat of a loss of status does produce often makes for engrossing viewing, as similarly afflicted clubs engage in the football equivalent of mortal combat. Those at the opposite end of the Premiership should be wary, too, as the stragglers suddenly discover reserves of strength. Thus the matches played on Wednesday night provided a mix to be savoured.

Middlesbrough, bottom of the Premiership pile, produced the most startling performance, brushing aside

Derby County 6-1 at the Riverside Stadium in a dress rehearsal for the FA Cup quarter-final at the Baseball Ground tomorrow. Outscrambled chances and lost points can play havoc with the nervous systems of the most robust players and the most resolute manager.

Reports have also re-emerged that Fabrizio Ravanelli, who scored his third hat-trick of the season to take his tally to 24, is again being courted by a host of Italian clubs, including Internazionale and AS Roma. Emerson is apparently attracting interest from Italy, too, with José Veiga, his agent, believed to have spoken to Lazio and Parma this week.

Southampton and Everton shared four goals at The Dell, with Southampton boldly retrieving a 2-0 half-time deficit, but Nottingham Forest's plight worsened with a 3-0 home defeat by Sheffield Wednesday. "We've scored only 24 times in 28 games and that's relegation stuff," Dave Bassett, the recently-appointed Forest general manager, said. "That's our problem and it's painful to see."

"It's only the start," he said, "and we've got to build on this. The attitude from the players was excellent and it would be nice if they could prove wrong a few of their critics."

Robson still has problems, though. Vladimir Kinder, Gianluca Festa, Emerson, Derek Whyte, Steve Vickers and Nigel Pearson are nursing injuries, with Kinder,

Whyte and Emerson unlikely to have recovered in time for the Cup rematch.

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plight worsened with a 3-0 home defeat by Sheffield Wednesday. "We've scored only 24 times in 28 games and that's relegation stuff," Dave Bassett, the recently-appointed Forest general manager, said. "That's our problem and it's painful to see."

"It's only the start," he said, "and we've got to build on this. The attitude from the players was excellent and it would be nice if they could prove wrong a few of their critics."

Southampton, trailing to the team that put seven goals past them in November, recovered through Slater's first goal for the club and Short's own-goal.

Leicester City surely ended any lingering doubt about their ability to retain top-flight status with a 1-0 victory against Aston Villa at Filbert Street, the defeat also denting Villa's hopes of claiming a UEFA Cup place.

"We're getting a bit closer to safety but we can't rest yet," Martin O'Neill, the Leicester manager, said. Steve Claridge, a second-half substitute, scored the decisive goal.

Blackburn Rovers also appear to be edging away from danger after a 1-1 draw against Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. "We probably need two or three more wins before we can feel secure, but we're on the right track," Tony Parkes, the Blackburn caretaker manager, said. Rovers have lost only three out of 17 league games since Parkes, who will be replaced by Roy Hodgson next season, took over from Ray Harford in October.

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Addressing supporters, O'Neill wrote: "We have enough to concern ourselves

O'Neill in trouble for McGhee 'joke'

BY RICHARD HORSON

MARTIN O'NEILL, the Leicester City manager, could face Football Association charges after appearing to encourage supporters to give Mark McGhee, his predecessor, a hostile reception if McGhee brings Wolverhampton Wanderers to Filbert Street next season.

McGhee left Leicester to become the manager at Molineux in December 1995 after just a year in charge and has acknowledged since that City supporters had reason to feel aggrieved at his departure. Wolves have improved markedly under his charge and lie second in the Nationwide League first division, well placed for promotion to the FA Carling Premiership.

O'Neill's comments were made in the final paragraph of his programme notes for the game on Wednesday night against Aston Villa, whose own manager, Brian Little, preceded McGhee at Leicester.

Addressing supporters, O'Neill wrote: "We have enough to concern ourselves

this season without venting any more anger on Brian and we should afford him the respect his achievements deserve. However, what you wish to do if and when Mark McGhee visits us with Wolves is entirely at your own discretion."

Yesterday afternoon, a spokesman for Wolves denied earlier suggestions that McGhee was taking legal advice over the article. Steve Double, the FA spokesman, said that if the FA would investigate if it received a complaint while O'Neill insisted that the remark was "tongue in cheek". The Leicestershire Constabulary does not intend to take any action.

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O

Midland club is forced into drastic cutbacks

David Powell, athletics correspondent, previews the world indoor championships

Smith and Baulch aiming to cash in on new incentives

THE outside of the house was bright and fresh but the inside was beginning to look shabby. Then along came Primo Nebiolo with his decorators, papering the interior walls with money. Now the indoor world championships are a respectable companion for the outdoor version. When the indoor championships were last staged, two years ago in Barcelona, only one world record was set, and that was in an under-developed event, the women's triple jump. While the field events were of a good standard, the track racing was, at best, patchy.

The absence of Michael Johnson and Svetlana Masterkova, the International Amateur Athletic Federation's (IAAF) male and female athletes of 1996, from the sixth indoor championships, taking place in Paris over the next three days, is disappointing but not worth dwelling on. The list of luminaries that are taking part is too long to pack into one sentence here.

These are the first IAAF world championships to pay prize-money: \$50,000 (about £31,000) to winners, \$50,000 to world record breakers, \$60,000 to victorious relay teams. The pay compares favourably with awards for the outdoor world championships in Athens this summer, where winners will receive \$60,000 plus \$100,000 for a world record.

The currency of conversation remains medals, not dollars, however, and finding an athlete prepared to say that he or she is here for the money is as unlikely as being able to persuade Nebiolo, the IAAF president, to remove the second word from his governing body's name. Steve Smith, one of two Great Britain athletes going into the championships as a favourite, almost admitted it yesterday, but stopped short.

Smith, the Olympic high-jump bronze medal-winner, said: "\$50,000 would go a long way to securing my future and

that is how I thought of it at the start of the season. But now what excites me is taking the title."

If successful, Smith would at last deliver on the potential he showed in 1992 when, after a memorable duel with Tim Forsyth, of Australia, he won the world junior title. He has yet to win a senior one, but has a silver or bronze medal from each of the four main outdoor championships.

"I have taken enough medals, there has got to be a time when I start taking titles," he

Instead Baulch faces Derek Mills and Dion Minor, neither of whom have broken 46sec this season. Allen Johnson, Jackson's successor as the world's pre-eminent sprint hurdler, failed to qualify from the United States trials, but Reggie Torian, another American, has popped up with a last-time, and Anier Garcia, from Cuba, is the athlete in form.

Ashia Hansen is likely to find Inna Lasovskaya, from Russia, dominant in the triple jump but the Briton should win a medal. Any other British medals, apart from in the relay, would be unexpected.

The first day highlight is the men's 60 metres, in which Bruny Surin's chances of a third successive title for Canada are all the greater for the withdrawal of Ato Boldon, from Trinidad, on discovering that to run both sprints, he would have to race five times today. He will concentrate on the 200 metres.

"I did not know about it until I got here," Boldon said. "If I had I would have done a Michael Johnson and demanded it was changed. I feel cheated."

After setting ten world records, George finally has the chance to show what she can do in an international championship event. A trapeze performer at first, then a

sprinter, it is the combination of these talents that has turned her into an overnight success.

"If I had not been a trapeze artist, I would not be vaulting like I am now," George, 22, said yesterday. "The aerial sense is so important. But not only do I have a gymnastic background, I was also a sprinter and the two combine very well."

Although there are more incentives than ever for athletes to trim world records, rather than savage them, George is too new to professional sport to be tainted by Sergey Bubka-style cynicism. Bubka raised the pole vault world record a centimetre at a time to maximise his earnings, and with bonuses on offer at the world championships for the first time, as well as at Grand Prix meetings, George might be tempted to follow suit. "No," she insists.

When she set an outdoor world record of 4.55 metres in Melbourne two weeks ago, George moved the mark up five centimetres. Nobody knows how good women can be at pole vaulting and George is in a hurry to soar close to the limits.

"I am not in it to make money," she said. "If we put it [the world record] up a centimetre at a time, if it is going to be years before it becomes a legitimate event." The prize-money and world record bonus payments on offer are only half those paid in long-standing events.

Is George complaining? "Not at all," she said. "Even with half prize-money, that is a bonus." Riches, indeed, beyond her imagination when she was last in Paris, a year before she discovered pole vaulting. That was in 1993. Nursing her backpacker's budget, she lived on French sticks, cheese and nutty chocolate.

They were frugal days, but cheerful days, in one way at least. "I am not allowed to eat chocolate anymore," George said. "The heavier you are, the more weight you have to carry over the bar."

Country practice may get London setting

BY DAVID POWELL

IT MAY be not much more than a germ of an idea at the moment, but the notion of the world cross-country championships taking place in central London, far away from the sport's rustic roots, has won support from leading officials in the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) and British Athletic Federation (BAF); in the case of the IAAF, the leading official.

"If we can put something [a bid] together like Hyde Park, the international federation would jump at it," Ken Rickhuss, the BAF chairman, said. He was responding to the decision to take the world championships to a city centre for the first time — to Turin this month — because Primo Nebiolo, the IAAF president, hopes that, by doing so, it will raise the discipline's traditionally low profile.

Pur to the IAAF, the response was that Nebiolo had thought of it already. The earliest that the championships could be staged in London would be 2001, unless political unrest were to force Belfast to withdraw as the host in 1999. The BAF would then need an alternative.

Turin may prove popular with spectators on March 23, but one man who believes that cross country on concrete is "just ludicrous" is David Clarke, the Great Britain team manager — one reason being that it will cost the earth. Or, rather, the earth will cost.

In the Parco del Valentino, the championships will take another long, sweeping turn away from tradition as lorry loads of earth are moved at huge expense to cover the extensive concrete areas in an attempt to turn the site into something resembling a cross-country course.

"It could be a fast, continental, world championships course — if the grass grows properly and it is not too wet," Clarke said, his cynicism obvious.

Otto Klappert, the chairman of the IAAF's cross-country committee, has voiced fears that, if it rains, "we could have problems".

DAVID POWELL



George's world-record performances have helped to raise the international profile of her fledgeling event

Flying circus girl hits new heights

She flies through the air with the greatest of ease, The daring young girl on the flying trapeze

The daring Australian is still propelling herself through the air, but in her national athletics vest, rather than the uniform of the Flying Fruit Fly Circus. Emma George, once a child trapeze artist, is expected to be the star turn this weekend in the newest event at the world indoor athletics championships in the Palais Omnisports, it was he who

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DAVID POWELL

In each event the world record is given first, followed by the European record and the British record

Men

60 metres

6.41 T Cason (USA) 1992

6.47 Christie (GB) 1995

6.47 L Christe (GB) 1995

1997 RANKINGS: 6.48 S Green

6.48 G Fuchs (USA) 1995

6.51 T Montgomery (USA) 1995

6.55 J Livingstone (GB) 1995

200 metres

19.92 F Fredericks (Neth) 1995

20.25 L Christie (GB) 1995

20.25 L Christie (GB) 1995

1997 RANKINGS: 20.35 A Badi

20.51 R Gulin (USA) 1995

20.61 D Turner (GB) 1995

400 metres

4.21 W H Guzman (Mex) 1997

4.34 P Ewing (Ken) 1995

4.38 H Guzman (Mex) 1995

4.44 P Ewing (Ken) 1995

RADIO CHOICE

Haunted by Ravanelli's invisible touch

LYNNE TRUSS

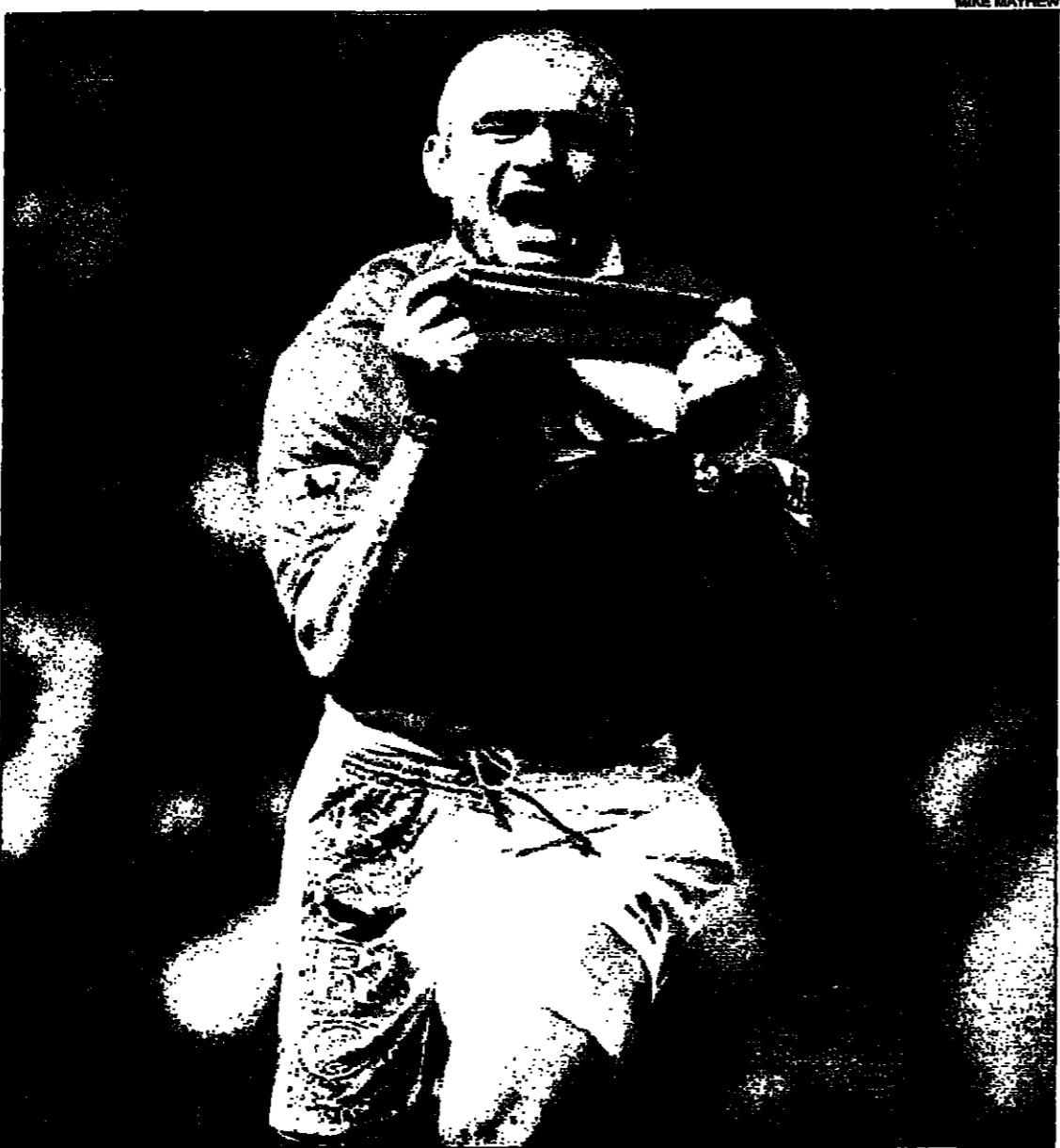


Kicking and screaming

There was a big queue for passport photos in the Boots in Middlesbrough on Wednesday afternoon, and it seemed quite natural that azure foreign skies should beckon. This was the greyest of grey days in a town centre where tumbleweed blows unheeded through the shopping precinct, and Mrs Emerson quite rightly refuses to leave the sauna except for the solarium. Kids shoot cats for pleasure in Teesside, according to the headline in the *Evening Gazette*. During rush hour, Middlesbrough railway station is deserted, like something weird out of *The Avengers*. To cap it all, of course, the football team is hanging by its fingertips to the Premiership, despite massive local support and more cup chances than it quite knows what to do with.

Why go to see Middlesbrough at home to Derby County? Well, naturally I asked that question a few times myself, especially as I walked pluckily alone through dark underpasses between the town centre and the Riverside Stadium, having failed to secure a tour of the spectacular new ground in the afternoon. Pedestrians are warned by helpful posters not to linger on the railway line when taking this hazardous route — "Let Juninho make the dangerous crosses! Use the railway crossing points safely!" — but I only saw the posters after I'd stopped on the railway track with my fingers in my mouth and thought resignedly: "And now, on top of everything, I'm going to be killed."

Middlesbrough is a passionate place about football, and of course Wednesday evening was — in a lesser way, perhaps, than Manchester United's encounter with the Portuguese — historic. *From Doom to Boom* is the title of a book covering the club's past ten years, and the phrase sums up the dramatic curve of the match on Wednesday



Ravanelli, unaffected by his mystic miss, celebrates one of his three goals with typical shirtlessness

quite neatly. Beating Derby 6-1 in the league (just days before the FA Cup match) was what you might call an unlooked-for result. The man who settled next to me in the South Stand before kick-off cast his mind back to another Middlesbrough v Derby match, in 1958, when the final score was a madly exciting 7-1. How we laughed at the thought of it! "Won't see that tonight" we agreed. "Late summer, it was," he said wistfully, fingering the cloth cap curled in his lap. "I remember Derby went one up."

This was a loose game from the start, and compared with the squeaky tightness of the Newcastle v Monaco game the previous night — in which it seemed that players had to leave the pitch if they wanted to

turn round — one's first impression of all the light and air between the free-running players brought to mind ponies gambolling in the New Forest, or 22 puppies up for a lark. Not much man-marking; lots of passing to the Invisible Man. Only one goal occurred in the first half (Kinder striking from 30 yards) but it felt like a lot more. Perhaps it was the constructive yelling of the loyal home crowd, but it felt as if anything could happen.

What largely happened in the second half was that Derby kept neglecting to run back to their own goal, perhaps out of misplaced penitence. "No, look, we're going this way," they objected, hand-on-hip, as Juninho or Craig Hignett turned on sixpences and sped off

with the ball, like dogs in a park spoiling a nice game of catch. It must have been very annoying for Derby to see this happen, especially four times on the trot. Play was rarely stopped for free kicks, either. The referee, Mike Reed (you know who), did a lot of that annoying refereeing of running with both arms out in front — "Play on! Don't stop!" — suggestive of a man winning a sports day race balancing cups and saucers on his wrists.

I have to say that I had a mystical experience at this match, disbelieving it if you will. When Ravanelli made his first attempt at goal in the 21st minute, which he missed, I saw the ball go in. I know I can't have done, but I did. It was right in front of me, too. Kinder and Beck somehow put

the ball in Ravanelli's path, just six yards from the vacant goal, he struck it with his right foot and, well, I know what I saw. Other people near me likewise saw the phantom goal, and we danced and pranced. This was my first experience of mass hallucination at a football match. It's a good job I'm not trusted with match reporting.

By the end of the evening, however, the crowd had seen three real, flesh-and-blood goals from their famous Italian and were rightly singing "Super Ravanelli" stuff, evidently for the first time in months. Stung, perhaps, by widespread criticism of his notable under-achievement for the club (playing rubbish for £40,000 a week), the White Feather decided to turn hero on Wednesday, and earn his crust. Juninho, meanwhile, was his usual adorably eager self. Emerson elegantly twinkle-toed his way through some tight spots, but passed badly and was taken off, quite seriously

'Other people near me likewise saw the phantom goal, and we danced and pranced'

injured. It's odd to think that these exotic Teessiders probably won't be on show next season. I can't believe they'd get crowd support like Middlesbrough's anywhere else.

Sorry not to say much about Derby, but it's the curse of the novice: I can only concentrate on one team at a time. At least I am generally loyal to the home side (only waiving this rule when the visitors are Chelsea). Such identification can be a bit scary, however. On Wednesday night, I found myself cheering with everyone else at Southampton's half-time score of 0-2, as if I really wanted it. Yes, yes, let Southampton go down! Three points to Middlesbrough, and no points to Southampton: that's what we want up here in the North East, isn't that right, pet?

I was secretly relieved, however, to learn afterwards that Southampton drew their match. How could I really wish harm on Matt Le Tissier and his strip-soaked brigade? I had a lovely time at The Dell last autumn. Good grief, they beat Middlesbrough, didn't they? What a brutal business this relegation struggle is.

And by all accounts, there is fat chance the FA will relent at this stage, and say: "All right, only joking, you can *all* stay up." And then, as an afterthought, "Got you going, though, didn't we?"

BOWLS

Shaw almost in seventh heaven

By DAVID RYHS JONES

NORMA SHAW, from Thoraby, who for years was regarded as England's finest woman bowler, in the way that David Bryant was universally acknowledged as the sport's leading man, is on course to win the national indoor singles title for the seventh time at York today, after battling through to the semi-finals.

A delighted Shaw claimed yesterday that the competition for the title has got more intense over the years, and that the proliferation of tight-running bowls has made it more difficult to keep on winning.

"I am still using the same set of woods that took me to my

first title, in 1978," Shaw said. "They bend nicely, and that's the essence of the game. Too many competitors seem to have gone in for bowls with less bias, and it's spoiling the game."

In the semi-final today, Shaw will play Carol Ashby, of Eastbourne, who put an end to the hopes of Kath Strutt, who had qualified in four events, and has been on the green every day this week. Strutt led 15-9 but looked tired as she dropped ten shots without reply on the way to a 21-19 defeat.

A repeat of the 1988 final is likely, as Edna Bessell, of Yeovil, whom Shaw beat 21-20 to win the title nine years ago,

will take on Jayne Roylance, of North Walsham, in the other semi-final.

Bessell swept to an easy 21-7 win over Jane Redfern, of Rushden Town, but Roylance, the 1993 champion, had a tense struggle with her young international colleague, Kath Hawes, of Cheltenham, before getting home 21-14.

Roylance's brother, David Ward, who helped North Walsham to victory in the Denny Cup last weekend and will skip for England in Northern Ireland next week, has qualified in all four events for the men's nationals, which will be staged at Melton Mowbray next month.

HOCKEY

Cambridge should have edge

By ALEX RAMSAY

THE venue may not have the appeal of Twickenham, the event may not get the same exposure as the Boat Race, but the annual women's hockey match between Oxford and Cambridge Universities is a matter of pride and history nonetheless.

The teams will take to the field in Cambridge tomorrow to decide the fate of the Challenge Cup and, having prised it from Oxford's grasp last year with a 3-0 victory, their first win since 1991, Cambridge are determined not to let it go.

Cambridge won promotion to the second division of the East Super League last year and have been trying to find their feet ever since. Their cause is not helped by the fact that seven of the 14 league matches are outside term time, which makes getting a team together an almost impossible task.

While the men will play their match at the National Hockey Stadium, in Milton Keynes, the women are forced to play second fiddle, holding their fixture at the University Astrotrurf in Wilberforce Road.

CAMBRIDGE: C Wright (St Catherine's Melbourne and St Catherine's), L Ellwood (King's Hall Girls and Jesus), K Hunter (Trinity Hall Girls), S Hargreaves (Jesus), N Hobson (Peterhouse), P Pritchett (Cathedral Girls and Church), R Gilpin (Manchester Girls), S Goss (Jesus), S Hargreaves (Jesus), James Allen's Girls HS and St John's), S Gilpin (Cheltenham Ladies and St John's), A Hargreaves (Jesus), N Hobson (Peterhouse), and E Emmanuel (Jesus). Nottingham Girls and Queens' (Cathedral Girls and St John's), L Huddenthurst (King's College), A Lucy (Magdalene), H McCallum (Peterhouse), V Peppi (Plymouth and Queen's), V Poppe (Plymouth and Pembroke), A Rendall (Church Hill CS and New College), S Smith (Jesus), S Smith (Jesus), S St Hughe's, J Serradas (Bradford Girls GS and St Hughe's), L Atherton (Lady Bayford), and A Williams (Jesus). Cheltenham Ladies and Queens' (Cathedral Girls and St John's), L Short (Edgbaston and St Catherine's) Cambridge: C Wright (St Catherine's Melbourne and St Catherine's), L Ellwood (King's Hall Girls and Jesus), K Hunter (Trinity Hall Girls), S Hargreaves (Jesus), N Hobson (Peterhouse), P Pritchett (Cathedral Girls and Church), R Gilpin (Manchester Girls), S Goss (Jesus), S Hargreaves (Jesus), James Allen's Girls HS and St John's), S Gilpin (Cheltenham Ladies and St John's), A Hargreaves (Jesus), N Hobson (Peterhouse), and E Emmanuel (Jesus). Nottingham Girls and Queens' (Cathedral Girls and St John's), L Huddenthurst (King's College), A Lucy (Magdalene), H McCallum (Peterhouse), V Peppi (Plymouth and Queen's), V Poppe (Plymouth and Pembroke), A Rendall (Church Hill CS and New College), S Smith (Jesus), S Smith (Jesus), S St Hughe's, J Serradas (Bradford Girls GS and St Hughe's), L Atherton (Lady Bayford), and A Williams (Jesus). Cheltenham Ladies and Queens' (Cathedral Girls and St John's), L Short (Edgbaston and St Catherine's) Cambridge: C Wright (St Catherine's Melbourne and St Catherine's), L Ellwood (King's Hall Girls and Jesus), K Hunter (Trinity Hall Girls), S Hargreaves (Jesus), N Hobson (Peterhouse), P Pritchett (Cathedral Girls and Church), R Gilpin (Manchester Girls), S Goss (Jesus), S Hargreaves (Jesus), James Allen's Girls HS and St John's), S Gilpin (Cheltenham Ladies and St John's), A Hargreaves (Jesus), N Hobson (Peterhouse), and E Emmanuel (Jesus). Nottingham Girls and Queens' (Cathedral Girls and St John's), L Huddenthurst (King's College), A Lucy (Magdalene), H McCallum (Peterhouse), V Peppi (Plymouth and Queen's), V Poppe (Plymouth and Pembroke), A Rendall (Church Hill CS and New College), S Smith (Jesus), S Smith (Jesus), S St Hughe's, J Serradas (Bradford Girls GS and St Hughe's), L Atherton (Lady Bayford), and A Williams (Jesus). Cheltenham Ladies and Queens' (Cathedral Girls and St John's), L Short (Edgbaston and St Catherine's)

The diarist as painter

Messages to Myself Radio 4 (FM), 10.00am.

The former New York journalist Edward Robb Ellis has filled his 35,000-page diary with more than 20 million words since he began compiling it nearly 70 years ago. Stuart Milligan reads extracts from this morning, and Ellis himself provides the diarist's authentic voice. The diary is full of remarkable pen-pictures that are almost as detailed as any in Dickens. Ellis records what President Truman told him about the infamous Senator McCarthy, the organisation of the Communist hunt-witches of the 1950s, how Irving Berlin reacted when he sang some of the composer's songs to him and, poignantly, why he felt a mystical bonding between his ancestors and his wife when they visited what was once New York's entry point for immigrants, Ellis Island.

Paths of Inspiration Radio 2, 7.00pm.

Trevor McDonald couldn't have improved on Desmond Tutu as his choice for the first eminent black person to be interviewed in this series. Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town and chairman of South Africa's Truth Commission, Tutu is his nation's spiritual leader. Heavy responsibilities all of them. Yet there is an extraordinary humility about the man, and an equally extraordinary absence of bitterness when he recalls the apartheid years. This being Radio 2, it's not surprising that the interview is interrupted from time to time to bear his favourite music and poems.

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe 6.00 Simon Mayo 7.30 Jo Whiley 8.00 Mary Campbell 4.00 Ken Bruce 8.15 10.00 Paths of Inspiration 7.00 Paths of Inspiration, featuring the best new dance music 10.00 One in the Jungle 12.00 Radio 1 Rap Show Presented by Tim Westwood 3.00am Charlie Jordan

RADIO 2

6.00am Alan Lester 7.30 Sarah Kennedy 9.30 Karl Davies 10.00 Julie Young 12.00 Debbie Thrower 3.00 Ed Masterson 7.00 Pete Tong: Essential Selection, featuring the best new dance music 10.00 One in the Jungle 12.00 Radio 1 Rap Show Presented by Tim Westwood 3.00am Charlie Jordan

RADIO 5 LIVE

6.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The Breakfast Programme 9.00 The Magazine 12.00 Midday with Mai 2.00pm Russ Fudge on Five 4.00 Nationwide with Julian Worricker 7.00 News Extra 7.30 Sport 8.00 Robins Barrell presents commentary on the Division One match between Barnsley and Sheffield United 10.00 Paper Talk with Brian Alexander and Nick Higham 11.00 News Extra with David Michael 12.00 After Hours 2.00pm Up All Night with Richard Dallyn

TALK RADIO

5.00am Chris Ashley and Sandy War 6.00 Paul Ross 8.00 Steve Cheshire 12.00 Lorraine Kelly 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00 Duestone, with Peter Davsey 7.00 Moz Dev's Sportszone 10.00 Mike Allen 1.00am Ian Collier

VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Russ 'n' Jono 10.00 Graham Dene 12.00m Jeremy Clark 4.00 Nicky Howe 7.00 Paul Coyle (FM) / Robin Banks (AM) 10.00 Alan Freeman 12.00 Mark Forrest 2.00am Howard Pearce

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Penny Gore, includes Faust (Pelléas et Mélisande); Elgar (Piano Quartet, Op 84); Chamber (Anor Vince Ogi Costa); Beethoven (Sonata in E flat); Schubert (Quintet); Vienna Waltz (Fantasy Quintet); Glazunov (Piano Concerto No 2 in B); Brahms (Piano Concerto in G minor, Op 19); Harry (John Field Suite); Chopin (Nocturne in B, Op 62 No 1); Alkan (String Quartet No 3 in E flat).

9.00 Morning Collection, with Peter Hobday, Walton (Overture, Portsmouth Point; Cello Concerto); Wagner (Suite; Sleeping Beauty).

10.00 Studio Ensemble, with Boris Weisberg, including Walton (Sonata for Strings); Scriabin (Vers la Flamme, Op 74); Mussorgsky (The Nursery); Rachmaninoff (Cello Sonata in G minor, Op 19); Harry (John Field Suite); Chopin (Nocturne in B, Op 62 No 1); Alkan (String Quartet No 3 in E flat).

12.00 Composer of the Week: Anton Webern

12.40pm Bach, Preludes and Fugues in F minor; in B flat minor. Performed by Mieczyslaw Horowitz, piano

1.00pm The Chamber Music Concert (Sonata for Strings); Scriabin (Vers la Flamme, Op 74); Mussorgsky (The Nursery); Rachmaninoff (Cello Sonata in G minor, Op 19); Harry (John Field Suite); Chopin (Nocturne in B, Op 62 No 1); Alkan (String Quartet No 3 in E flat).

2.00 Metamorphoses, Britten (Six Metamorphoses after Ovid); John Anderson, oboe

2.15 The Classical Hour, introduced by Anthony Rooley. Musica Secreta performs music from 17th-century Italy to Lucrezia, Margherita Cozzolani and Barbara Strozzi (n)

3.00 Mining the Archive, A celebration of the life of the cellist Thomas Gilt

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping (LW) 6.00 News & 10 Farming Today 6.30 6.30 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today, includes Thought for the Day 8.40 Yesterday in Parliament

9.00 News 9.05 Desert Island Discs with Susan Greenfield (r) 9.45 Durkin

10.00 News: Messages to Myself (FM) 10.15 An Act of Worship (LW)

10.15 On This Day (LW)

10.30 Weather 11.00 Hour, with Jenny Murray

11.30 The Natural History Programme, Presented by Joanne Phinck

12.00 News & You and Yours, Consumer Affairs and Environment affairs with Charlotte Smith

12.25pm The Food Programme, Derek Cooper visits the Rhondda Valley in South Wales 12.25 Weather

1.00 The World at One, with Nick Clarke

1.40 The Archers (r) 1.55 Shipping Forecast

2.00 Music Series: The Barber of Seville, performed by Anthony Rolfe Johnson, with Rosemary Leach and John Christie (1/3 r)

3.00 News & You and Yours, with Linda Lafferty Taylor and guests

4.00 News 4.05 Kitchen Cabinet, with Tim Marlow looks back at the British arts of 30 years ago

4.45 News Story: Civil Peace, by Christina Achilleo (r)

5.00 PM 5.55 Shipping Forecast Weather

6.00 Six O'Clock News, featuring Places, David Stoddart reviews the latest for things to do this weekend

7.00 News 7.05 The Archers

RADIO 5 WORLD SERVICE

1.00 As World Service

ARE YOU READY FOR A RUDDLES?</

Weighty matters exercise couch potatoes

By the end of last night's *Horizon* (BBC2) fat was undeniably a pessimist's issue. We're all going to die... and many of us are going to hasten the process by becoming seriously overweight. People who sit around watching television all day are particularly vulnerable, apparently. Nearly choked on my chocolate digestives.

The initial statistics, however, seemed reassuring. One in seven people in Britain are obese, which conveniently allowed six out of seven of us to sit back and think "well, it'll never happen to me, my blood serum's not going to turn the colour of softly boiled egg white". But just when you thought this was another scare-documentary aimed at "other people", just when you thought there might just be room for a little more sluttin' on that cracker, the producer (the aptly named Debbie Cadbury) twisted the butter knife.

BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (10856)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (T) (15216)
- 9.00 Breakfast News Extra (T) (5378910)
- 9.20 Style Challenge (4705567)
- 9.45 Kirby (4305552)
- 10.30 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (50216)
- 11.00 News (T) and weather (533849)
- 11.05 The Really Useful Show (7940378)
- 11.25 Change That (8518910)
- 12.00 News (T), regional news and weather (748238)
- 12.25pm The Alphabet Game (5416281)
- 12.30 Going for a Song (6793649)
- 12.55 The Weather Show (79857113)
- 1.00 News (T) and weather (18303) 1.30 Regional news and weather (53607858)
- 1.40 Neighbours (T) (11821465)
- 2.05 Jane's House (1993) with Anne Archer and James Woods. An independent executive marries a widower and attempts to help him to bring up his teenage children, but their wedded bliss is threatened when she fails to adjust to her new role of wife and mother. Directed by Glenn Jordan (7102823)
- 3.30 Playdays (T) (5833194) 3.50 The Friday Zone (4526571) 4.45 Newround Extra. Aspiring young journalists quiz the three party leaders (9618839) 5.10 Blue Peter (T) (5082295)
- 5.35 Neighbours (T) (681552)
- 6.00 News (T) and weather (197)
- 6.30 Regional News Magazine (587)
- 7.00 Big Break Alex Higgins takes on fellow Irishmen Joe Senn and Steve Murphy in the snooker game show (T) (7007)
- 7.30 Top of the Pops (T) (571)
- 8.00 Phoenix Classic prison comedy (T) (6755)
- 8.30 A Question of Sport light-hearted quiz hosted by David Coleman. The team captains, John Parrott and Sam Torrance, are joined by Jason McAteer, Judy Oakes, Tony Underwood and Jamie Osborne (T) (5232)
- 9.00 Nine O'Clock News (T), regional news and weather (7842)
- 9.30 Silent Witness: Cease Upon the Midnight (22) The exhumation of Mark Tate's body throws up a few surprises, while on the personal front, Sam's relationship with Peter Ross intensifies (T) (563842)
- 10.20 The Mrs Merton Show Favelle Vinnie Jones and pop star Boy George have a heart-to-heart with the party pensioner (T) (772465)
- 10.50 Where Eagles Dare (1969) with Richard Burton, Clint Eastwood and Michael Horden. Classic espionage thriller based on Alastair MacLean's book. An elite commando group is dispatched to rescue an American general held by the Nazis in a castle fortress in the Bavarian Alps. Directed by Brian G. Hutton (T) (2642755)
- 1.20am Unknown Guest (1943, b/w) with Victor Jory, Pamela Blake, Harry Hayden and Veda Ann Borg. A woman suspects her beau of murder when he takes over his aunt and uncle's inn. Directed by Kurt Neumann (7031446)
- 2.25 Weather (8454532)

"Doctors are discovering," the narration began ominously, "that the risk of serious disease increases with just a small gain in weight." Suddenly it was hum-the-plimolls time.

Reassurance, we were told, could be sought only through something called the body mass index. Unfortunately this turned out to involve the sort of sum that five-year-olds probably need to get into primary schools, but which are way beyond their agitated elders. "Your-weight-in-kilograms," gabbled the hitherto calm Jo Unwin, "divided by the square root of your height in metres." Or was it your height squared? Anyway, anything over 25 and you were in trouble. I made mine 60. Where were those plimolls?

Did things get better after that? I'm not entirely sure. We learnt that as a nation we were eating less than 20 years ago (a good thing) but that we were exercising much more. Heather lost six stone and

much less (a very bad thing, particularly for our increasingly cooped-up and increasingly plump children). We were told, very firmly, that the idea of fat people having a "slow metabolism" was a myth and then we got thoroughly confused when we were told that fat mice might have the genetic equivalent of a slow metabolism after all. Give them a jab of a hormone that they do not produce naturally and lo, they become thin mice. The holy slimming grail? Sadly, only for mice.

Which was why Heather was having her stomach stapled. She'd simply had enough of being 23 stone. It was either the operation or another suicide attempt. Unlike the diet pills and fat substitutes that have caused such problems in America, the surgery actually worked. In the following six months, Heather lost six stone and

chins at all times, or clothes on. Given the hype that preceded the series, I think one brief glimpse of Robson Green's bottom definitely goes down as a disappointment.

My other disappointment is the humour. There's simply too much of it. It's not so much the occasionally laboured wit in Paul Abbott's scripts or indeed the performances Julian Rhind-Tutt, as the increasingly neurotic Danny, gets better each week) but the direction. As last night's knockout hospital inquiry scenes indicated, comedy has been pursued with a vigour that suggests a reluctance to tackle a serious subject seriously. That, however, is a hallmark of ITV drama and if the ratings are anything to go by, they are right and I am high-minded (except, of course, when it comes to counting bottoms) and wrong.

But despite these misgivings, I'll happily accept that *Reckless* has become compulsive. Thursday

she also rediscovered her smile.

Of course, there are other ways of keeping weight down and by now we are familiar with the method preferred by Dr Owen Springer and Anna Fairley in *Reckless* (ITV). It's not the sex that burns up their calories, it's all the exhausting manoeuvres to ensure that absolutely nothing untoward appears on our screens. Basically it's sheets tucked firmly on

the bed.

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REVIEW



Matthew Bond

(BBC2), several very fatal attacks were possible because our Desert Storm quadruple amputee... was capable of astral projection. I wish I hadn't started this paragraph.

Anyway, it was all very dark and foggy as it always is in *X-Files*, Mulder muttered about astral and corporeal bodies and Scully snapped "Mulder", in that special exaggerated way of hers.

Up until then I'd been sceptical of claims that the BBC had moved the series to a later hour on the ground of taste (it now goes out against *News at Ten* - spooky, huh?) but this episode suggested right was on its side. Within minutes a shell-shocked Colonel had attempted suicide by throwing himself in a pool of boiling water. This being the *X-Files*, he survived... unlike Sergeant Aikten, whose date with the hospital wood-chipper thankfully occurred off-screen. Never mind "out there", the truth is horrific.

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**CRICKET 41**

Rebels committed to
revive Sussex after
flood of departures

SPORT

FRIDAY MARCH 7 1997

ATHLETICS 45

Australia's girl from
flying circus takes
act on world stage



Novices of the autumn spring into action with exhilarating demolition of Porto

United confound Euro-sceptics

BY ROB HUGHES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

UNLESS your name is Hilario, and you were deluged by goals on Wednesday, or unless you were one of 3,000 FC Porto fans soaked morning, noon and night by rainfall, then you had to draw pleasure from the command performance laid on by Manchester United in beating their Portuguese opponents 4-0 in the first leg of the European Cup quarter-finals.

United is already a brand name on every continent, and the vivacity, the confidence, the style with which the victory was completed would be bound to increase the respect, and therefore the value, of Manchester United wherever football is the *lingua franca*.

One simple litmus test: on the London Stock Exchange United's share value rose yesterday by £10 million, to more than £430 million. But why sulky art with money? The adrenalin of the match carried all who saw it as if on some runaway stallion.

Seeing Ryan Giggs repro-

O'Neill faces FA rap 44
Copybook Carbon 44
Lynne Truss 46

duce his thoroughbred skills, his outrageous speed of control, reminded us that he was raised with genuine world-class talent. Seeing Eric Cantona, imperious once more, using the field for his imaginative brush strokes, simply demanded applause.

And what of David May? One month after a hernia operation, he seemed to become Steve Bruce, hitherto a pretender but now competing for every ball, appearing composed under pressure, reading the game, and even advancing to start the scoring rolling.

"When you manage this club, there are experiences that can take your breath away," Alex Ferguson, the United manager, had said in October. Between then and now his team had surrendered five and six goals to Newcastle United and Southampton respectively, had looked like novices in Europe, and yet had matured into the prospective champions of the continent.

Complacency, of course, would burst the bubble. Even if United finish off Porto in the away leg, they would be unlikely to meet a goalkeeper

so fallible as young Hilario.

Rather, they could expect a

tumultuous challenge in the

semi-final from Borussia

Dortmund, first-leg con-

querors of Auxerre on Wed-

nesday, and then, perhaps, a

final in Munich in May

against Juventus, undoubtedly

the most impressive club

side in the world.

The statistics do not com-

pare with the sensation of the

performance, nor the com-

petitiveness of United's concen-

tration and teamwork.

However, it is instructive to

note that, on Wednesday,

Manchester United had nine

of their 13 shots on goal on

target. This ratio is the com-

plete opposite to last October,

when United failed to score

against Juventus; failed to test

the goalkeeper with ten of

their 14 attempts.

In 1964, United had beaten

Sporting Lisbon 4-1 at home in

the Cup Winners' Cup, and

went out 5-0 in the return leg.

In 1978, against Porto, a

5-2 United victory at Old

Trafford meant nothing

because they had already suc-

cumbed 4-0 in the northern

Portuguese city.

The differences are obvi-

ous. Juventus are a more gifted

team by far than Porto,

Juventus pressure opponents

and Manchester United

defend, forever chasing the game,

forced to compete at a pace

beyond them, snatched at

opportunities, whereas on

Wednesday, in a more com-

posed state, they could strike

at their chances.

"We've shown the rest of

Europe we are not pushovers

any more," May said amid the

intoxication of the post-match

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... though that was a hell of a

performance."

Ferguson's own work this

season has also been extraor-

dinary. After the dark month of

November, when it really

did seem that his team was

exposed, he spoke again and

again of "the good ability, good

temperament, good ath-

leticism" in his team.

To restore belief in each of

his players, who at times had

seemed bewildered and lost,

must have taken psychological

management bordering on

brainwashing. For that alone,

Ferguson may earn the title

manager of the season.

He keeps on doing it, keeps

on breathing into his football

teams an edge that has an

element of arrogance. But

when athletes reach the

heights of Wednesday, that

sheer effrontery, allied to the

work ethic, is surely ac-

ceptable.

There were other, cold sta-

tistics from the bold victory on

Wednesday. Manchester United

had less of the ball over 90

minutes. They never once ran

offside, and Porto, who came

to the match unbeaten after six

outings in the Champions'

League, could not fashion a

solitary shot on Peter

Schmeichel's goal.

Nothing else in Europe was

so sweeping or so one-sided.

Dortmund beat Auxerre 3-1,

though the French were un-

lucky to have a goal disal-

lowed. Ajax, thanks to Patrick

Kluivert, drew at home to

Atletico Madrid, but Kluivert

is out of the second leg, having

accrued two yellow cards.

Juventus, doing just enough

in the Italian manner, allowed

Rosenborg to score first

in Norway, and, two minutes

later, equalised through

Christian Vieri.

The competition is taking

shape: Juventus remain the

champions to beat, but sud-

denly the name of Manchester

United draws extra respect.

And — in this era — extra

income to perpetuate their

business.

Chelsea

call on
Parker
to act
as cover

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

CHELSEA have signed Paul Parker, the former Manchester United and Eng- land full back, until the end of the season as defensive cover. Parker, 32, was a free agent, having arrived in Britain this week from Hong Kong. He has also played for Derby County this season.

Chelsea complete a hat-trick of West London clubs for the experienced defender, who started his career with Fulham and then moved to Queens Park Rangers.

As Ruud Gullit, the player- manager, Michael Duberry and Eriksen Johansen are all injured, Chelsea were keen to strengthen their squad before the transfer deadline later this month.

Newcastle United, who have operated without a reserve side this season, will have four teams representing them next season. Kevin Keegan, the former manager controversially pulled Newcastle out of the Pontins Central League at the start of the season, leaving United without any competitive football for players not on first team duty.

Kenny Dalglish, the manager, who has appointed Alan Irvine, the former Blackburn Rovers coach, to his coaching staff, has now indicated he intends to have a reserve side next season, plus a team in the Northern Alliance and a junior XI.

"I want to put us on a firm footing, which means playing at all levels to make certain the best young players come here and stay here," he said. "We will establish a reserve side next season and have also applied for membership of the Northern Alliance to help the juniors step up."

Reading have parted company with Bobby Mihaylov, the Bulgarian goalkeeper, six months before his contract was due to end. The 34-year-old, who would have been eligible for a free transfer in the summer, has been troubled by injuries throughout his 18 months at Elm Park and restricted to only 28 appearances.

Steve Gritt, the manager of Brighton and Hove Albion, the bottom club in the Nationwide League, has won the February third division manager-of-the-month award.



Lighting up Europe: Manchester United supporters revel in the aura of supremacy that enabled Old Trafford to fulfil its "Theatre of Dreams" tag on Wednesday night

Ashes optimism from England

BY SIMON WILDE

ENGLAND'S cricketers finally reached home yesterday at the end of their 14-week tour of Zimbabwe and New Zealand. They arrived at Heathrow after a grueling 28-hour flight from Wellington, which involved three changes of plane as they travelled via Auckland and Los Angeles, but were in good spirits after their Test wins in New Zealand and were looking forward to the challenge of meeting Australia this summer.

"Australia are the best team in the world and we shall have

to be at our maximum when

we play them, but we shall

prepare well and are looking

forward to it," David Lloyd,

the coach, said. "As for this

tour, it has been terrific and

we thoroughly enjoyed it. It's

good to be home and preparations

for the Ashes start now." The first Texaco Trophy match is on May 22.

Michael Atherton, who is

certain to be retained as

captain, was equally upbeat.

"We've got a good set of

players," he said. "There were

very few problem areas on this

tour and I felt that a lot of the